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Musical Compositions of Venkatamakhi

(Kausika)

When the Paramacharya of the Kanchi Kamakoti Peetham was camping at Kurnool in 1983 a batch of devotees from Madras went there to pay their respects to the saint. The Acharya spoke to them at length about the services rendered by Venkatamakhi to Carnatic music and desired that steps should be taken to persuade Vidwans to sing at least some selected Gitas and Prabandhas of Venkatamakhi in their concerts. On their return to Madras the devotees contacted Sri T. S. Parthasarathy, Secretary of the Music Academy and informed him of His Holiness's desire. The Music Academy arranged, during its annual conference in December 1983, a lecture demonstration on Venkatamakhi by Smt. R. Vedavalli during which she read a paper on the musicologist and also sang two Prabandhas in Mechabauli and Narayanagaula and five Gitas in Bilahari, Hindolam, Chamaram, Mohanam and Madhyamavati.

During the Academy's conference in 1985 Dr. Padma Subrahmanyam presented a dance demonstration based on the compositions of Venkatamakhi. In her lecture she explained that a Prabandha had six angas or sections viz Svara, Biruda, Pada, Tenaka, Patam and Tala and therefore had all the ingredients required for a dance composition. She performed a Lakshya Gita in Mohanam, the Uma Tilaka Prabandham in Mechabauli and a Kaivara Prabandha in Narayanagaula. She said that the Solkattus furnished by Venkatamakhi himself enabled her to choreograph the pieces in the Adavus mentioned in the dance treatises of the period like the Sangita Saramita of Tulaja.

In the meanwhile the Madras devotees decided to bring out a small publication containing selected Gitas and Prabandhas of Venkatamakhi in which he specifically mentions the names of his parents as Govinda Dikshita and Nagambika. A booklet containing four Prabandhas and five Gitas of Venkatamakhi with notation was prepared by Sri T. S. Parthasarathy with the lives of Govinda Dikshita and Venkatamakhi and a special article also added. The booklet was released

(a)

in the presence of His Holiness the Paramacharya at the Kamakoti Math at Kanchipuram on January 11, 1987. There was a distinguished gathering which included Sri T. T. Vasu, Sri T. Sadasivam, Smt. M. S. Subbulakshmi, Dr. Padma Subrahmanyam, Smt. Syamala Balakrishnan, Sri S. Balakrishnan and Smt. R. Vedavalli. Sri T. V. Venugopala Iyer and Sri T. S. Gurumurti Iyer, who were responsible for the publication of the booklet and the release function, were present. At the command of His Holiness Sri T. S. Parthasarathy explained the background of the Venkatamakhi tradition in Carnatic music and the following is a summary:

“Vidyaranya was the first writer to write a treatise dealing exclusively with Carnatic music and to use the term ‘Mela’. Vidyaranya was chiefly instrumental for the founding of the Vijayanagar empire on the banks of the Tungabhadra in 1336 A.D. by Harihara and Bukka. Vidyaranya was a versatile scholar and the then pontiff of the Sarada Peetham at Sringeri. In addition to numerous works on Advaita, he wrote the ‘Sangita Sara’ in Sanskrit in which he mentioned 15 Mela ragas and 50 janya ragas current in his time.

Vidyaranya’s work has, however, not been traced so far but Govinda Dikshita makes a specific mention of it in his ‘Sangita Sudha’ which he wrote in the name of the Tanjore ruler, Raghunatha Nayak. Dikshita avers that he had scrutinized the Sangita Sara written by Vidyaranya and taken his views into consideration.

Govinda Dikshita, who was a Karnataka Smartha Brahmin, was the minister of Achyutappa Nayak (1577-1614) and Raghunatha Nayak (1614-1635). He is known as ‘Ayyan’ in the Tanjore District and there are many places commencing with this name like Ayyanpettai. The ‘Sangita Sudha’ has been written on the plan of the Sangita Ratnakara and although it is ascribed to Raghunatha Nayak, Venkatamakhi says in his ‘Chaturdandi Prakasika’ that it was written by his father Govinda Dikshita. The work was published by the Music Academy in 1940.

(b)

Venkatamakhi was the second among the eight sons of Govinda Dikshita. He studied the sastras under his brother Yajnanarayana Dikshita and music under one Tanappacharya from the North. Tanappacharya was the son of one Honnayya and was also known as Venkatamantri. As desired by Vijayaraghava Nayak, who had succeeded Raghunatha Nayak, Venkatamakhi wrote his ‘Chaturdandi Prakasika’ in ten chapters covering Vina, Sruti, Svara, Mela, Raga, Alapa, Thaya, Gita, Prabandha and Tala. Alapa, Thaya, Gita and Prabandha are considered to be the four pillars of music and hence the name ‘Chaturdandi’. In the Mela chapter Venkatamakhi expounded his scheme of 72 Melas which, after a century, revolutionised the very nature of Carnatic music. Venkatamakhi made provision for the development of Carnatic music on a scientific basis for all time to come.

176 musical compositions by him in a dialect known as the ‘Bhandira Bhasha’ (a kind of Prakrit) have been printed in the monumental ‘Sangita Sampradaya Pradarsini’ written by the great Subbarama Dikshitar of Ettayapuram in 1904.”

Intervening now and then, the Paramacharya contributed illuminating comments on Govinda Dikshita who, he said, used to live at Pattisvaram near Kumbakonam. His Holiness narrated an incident from the life of the Dikshita in which he tried to save a sthapati from death but found that fate was inexorable.

After the release function, Smt. M. S. Subbulakshmi, Dr. Padma Subrahmanyam, Smt. Syamala Balakrishnan and Smt. R. Vedavalli rendered selections from the Prabandhas of Venkatamakhi and the Mela Raga Malika of Maha Vaidyanatha Sivan.



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Music & Mathematics-II*

By

Prof. K. R. RAJAGOPALAN

RAGA

We now consider another system which leads us to the famous *Melakarta* scheme of raga classification. In this scheme also, *Sa* and *Pa* have no other classifications. *Madhyama* is classified into two as *Suddha*

and *Prati*. Rishabha, Gandhara, Dhaivata and Nishadha take three values each, which can be designated with subscripts as R_1, R_2, R_3 etc. Their names are :

R_1 -	Suddha Rishabha	D_1 -	Suddha Dhaivata
R_2 -	Chatussruti ,,	D_2 -	Chatussruti ,,
R_3 -	Shatsruti ,,	D_3 -	Shatsruti ,,
G_1 -	Suddha Gandhara	N_1 -	Suddha Nishadha
G_2 -	Sadharana ,,	N_2 -	Kaisiki ,,
G_3 -	Antara ,,	N_3 -	Kakali ,,

Melakarta ragas are first divided into *Suddha Madhyama* ragas and *Pratimadhyama* ragas. A melakarta is a *Sampoorna* raga, taking all the seven notes. Thus, among Suddha madhyama ragas, only the notes R, G, D, N. will vary. In any raga, the notes must be in an ascending order only - e.g. a higher note cannot be followed by a lower note (for example, R_3 cannot come after R_1). For the human ear R_2 and G_1 are nearly indistinguishable; similarly R_3 and G_2 ; among Dhaivata and Nishada, D_2 and N_1 ; and D_3, N_2 - are indistinguishable.

tions. The only possible combinations are :

$R_1 G_1; R_2 G_1; R_3 G_1; R_2 G_2; R_2 G_3; R_3 G_3$; -i.e., six in all; Similarly *Dha* and *Ni* can combine only six ways Viz. $D_1 N_1; D_2 N_2; D_3 N_1; D_2 N_2; D_3 N_3; D_3 N_3$. Hence both these can vary in $6 \times 6 = 36$ ways and so we get a total of thirty six *Suddha madhyama* ragas; similarly, there would be an equal number of *Pratimadhyama* ragas, making in all, seventy two melakarta scales. This scheme of classification is the most widely accepted, even though all the seventy two ragas are not used in concert platforms. All other ragas are derived from these, either by omitting one or two or three notes, on the ascent or descent or both (except that one should not have a raga with less than five notes in all); or by changing the order of the notes (Vakra ragas).

Now, let us see how many ragas are possible among these notes. R can take any one of the three values R_1, R_2, R_3 but G cannot take all three values along with the three values for R - because of the restric-

* The first article was published in the Jan. '87 issue

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As different from this, in Western music, the notes are of "equal temperament". That is, the successive notes in an octave, follow a perfect geometric progression; and an octave contains 12 notes. A geometric progression is said to result if the ratio of any two consecutive terms in a series remains the same. Thus, the twelve notes can be written as:—

$$1, r, r^2, r^3, r^4, r^5, r^6, r^7, r^8, r^9, r^{10}, r^{11}, r^{12}.$$

The last note will be the higher octave and so we get $r^{12}=2$. The value of r is $2^{1/12}=1.05946$ nearly. Thus the ratio between any two notes is referred to as a semitone and its value = 1.0594. The piano key board (as also the harmonium and similar instruments) is tuned to equal temperament with 88 keys running over $7\frac{1}{2}$ octaves. Thus if shadja is 1, then $R_1=1.05946$; $R_2=(1.05946)^2$; $G_1=(1.05946)^3$; $G_2=(1.05946)^4$ and so on with $N_2=(1.05946)^{11}$. This would give us 12 notes (or *Srutis*). In Karnataka *Sangeetham*, the tuning is *just intonation*, derived as stated earlier. Hence neither piano nor similar instruments would be suitable for Karnataka music.

A raga is built around swaras. While swaras *alone* do not make a raga, without specifying the swaras the raga is not specified. To cite an oft-repeated comparison, swaras are like bricks with which one builds the mansion of a raga. Now a raga is understood from songs mainly (*alapana* comes later!) When the song is sung or set in notation, some notes are used. Can we analyse these notes and see how frequently each note occurs, etc? If we observe the *swarappaduthal* (notation), we can count the number of times each swara occurs. We have to make allowances for the *length* of each swara—because sometimes swaras may be of one *aksharakala* duration, or two

or three, or even six; sometimes when *madhyamakala* passages are sung, the duration of each note may be half or even one-fourth of an *aksharakala*. Taking all these into account, we can find frequency of occurrence of each note in a song and tabulate the results as under; for purpose of comparison, the frequencies can be converted to percentages.

Table 2 :—Frequency of occurrence of the various notes in the song "Sundaresvaruni" by Thyagaraja: the tune-setter is R. Rangaramanuja Ayyangar in his Kritimanimalai (Raga-Sankarabharana).

Swara	Percentage
Higher Ma (HM)	0.3
Higher Ga (HG)	2.03
Ri (HR)	5.6
Sa (HS)	18.4
Madhya Ni (N)	9.2
Dha (D)	13.6
Pa (P)	24.4
Ma (M)	13.9
Ga (G)	7.2
Ri (R)	2.2
Sa (S)	2.5
Lower NI (LN)	0.4

TOTAL ... 100.00

In the above table we have listed the notes in all three *Sthayi's* separately. If we ignore the *sthai*, then the figure in Table 3 result.

Table 3 : Frequency of occurrence of notes in the same song as in Table 2. Sthai ignored.

Swara	Percentage
S	20.9
R	7.8
G	9.5
M	14.2
P	24.4
D	13.6
N	9.6

The most frequently occurring notes are P and S—not surprising since these are the fixed swaras and they have to act as *resting places* during the song. But it does appear slightly strange, if one looks at this in a different light:—while saying that he is singing the seven notes of a raga, actually in 43 percent of cases, only S—P is being sung! This predominance of these two notes is a feature of any raga, any composer, or any tune-setter. Comparatively, the Rishabha is used very much less, followed by Gandhara and Nishadha.

Table 4 : Frequency of occurrence of the notes in the song 'Palintsu Kamakshi' by Syama Sastri, Tune setter—R. R. Ayyangar (Raga—Madhyamavati).

Swara	Percentage
S	25.3
R	23.3
M	12.8
P	19.4
N	19.2
Total	100.00

Sankarabharana is said to be a sarva-swaragamaka-varika-raga in which each of the swaras is almost equally 'important'. If this were really so, then each note should occur, approximately with equal percentages i.e., nearly 14 percent of the times

Since this raga has only five swaras, each must occur nearly 20 percent of the times. Comparatively R is used more, while M is used less. Of course, 45 percent of the swaras are of the S-P variety only.

These percentages can be used to draw the next Fig. 4, which is a sort of Bar-diagram—Histogram as the statistician would call it.

$\frac{100}{7} = 14.3$ nearly.) Only the frequency for Ma is near this figure.

Another song has been selected and the frequencies found out and exhibited in Table 4 and Fig. 4. The raga is *Madhyamavati*, a pentatonic raga with the notes S, R, M, P, N only.

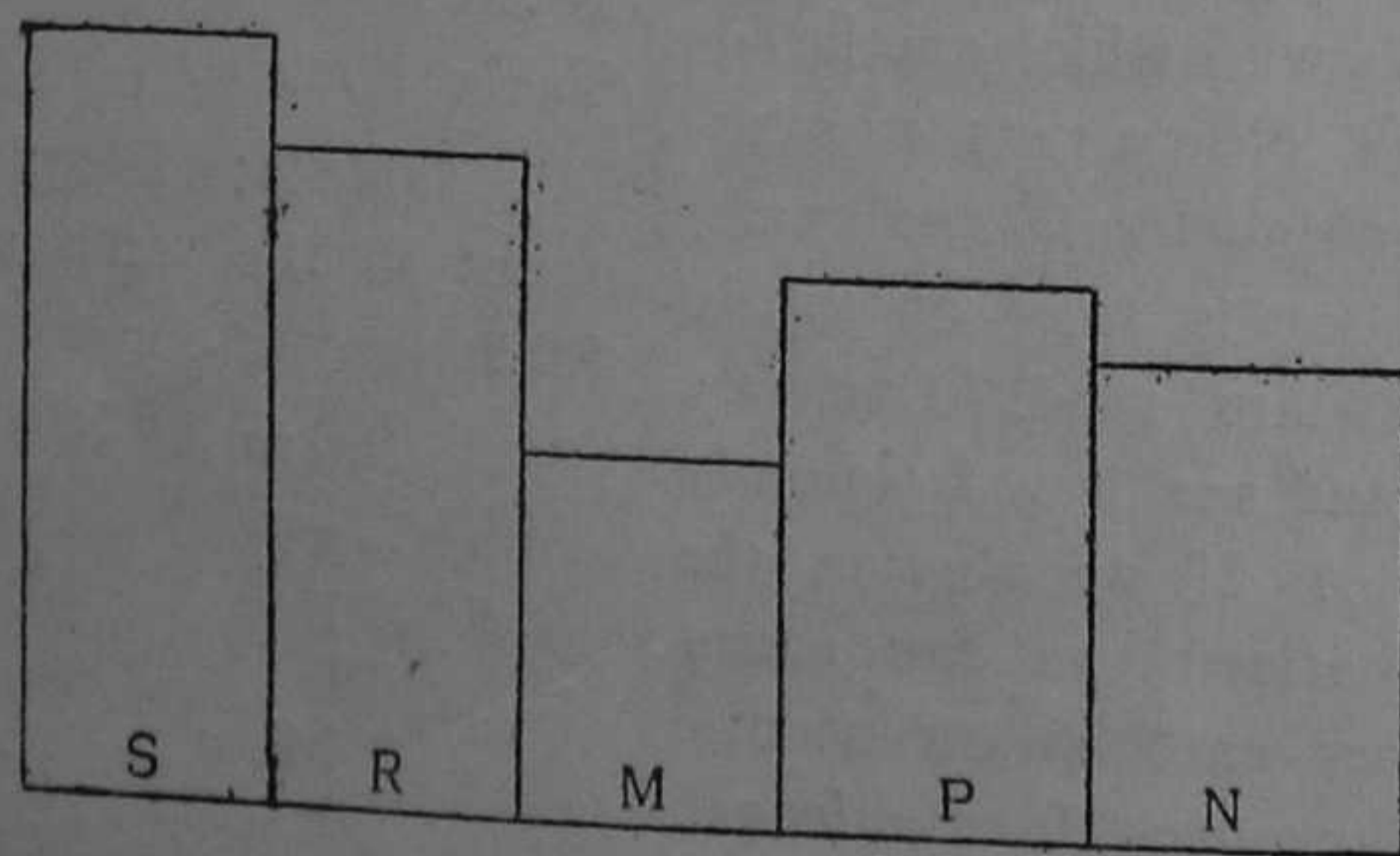


Fig. 4. "Palintsu Kamakshi" by Syama Sastri Raga : Madhyamavati

This diagram can be taken to be a *spectrum* of that particular song. If necessary, we can separate the various sthayis and draw a similar diagram. This is done for the song 'Sri Mangalambike' by Muthuswamy Deekshitar in the Raga Kalyani in Fig. 5. This is also a Sarva-Swaragamaka-varika-raga.

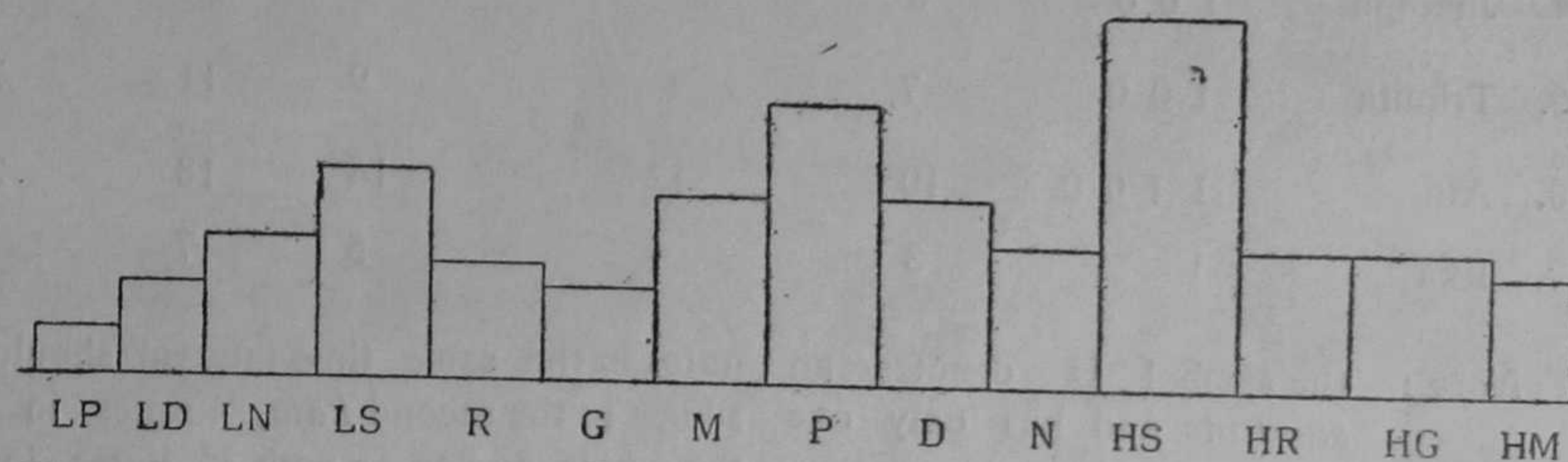


Fig. 5 "SRI MANGALAMBIKE" - MUTHUSWAMY DEEKSHITAR - KALYANI

The song has notes running from the *mandara* or lower sthayi Panchama (LP), to the Higher Sthayi Madhyama (HM). The most frequently occurring note is the Panchama (P), with G, M, D, HS being next in importance. R and N are less used.

tala pattern, each with five *Jaatis* or kinds making in all 35 talas. But if the total *akshara kalas* of each *tala* is considered, the number gets reduced to a mere nineteen.

I have drawn such diagram for all the Kritis of the Trinity in the two ragas of Kalyani and Sankarabharana and compared the features (Ref. 4).

The Dhruva tala has the angas (or parts) as follows : one *laghu* (denoted by 1) one *drutam* (denoted by 0) and two *laghu's* again. It is represented as 1 0 1 1. The *drutam* has always two *aksharakalas* while the *laghu* might have 3, 4, 5, 7, 9 *aksharakalas* depending on whether it is *Tisra*, *Chaturasra*, *Khanda*, *misra* or *sankheerna*. Thus, *Tisrajati Dhruva* tala would have in all $3+2+3+3=11$ *aksharakalas* made up of 3 *laghus* of three and one *druta* of two *aksharakalas*. Similarly, working out the details for all the *talas*, we get the following table :

TALA

Without doubt, the concept of *tala* would involve mathematics, perhaps to a larger extent. There are plenty of classifications in Talas also but in current practice, we use what are known as the *sapta*

Name of Tala	Angas	Total number of aksharakalas in the <i>jatis</i>				
		Tisra	Chaturasra	Khanda	Misra	Sankeerna
1. Dhruva	1 0 1 1	11	14	17	23	29
1. Matya	1 0 1	8	10	12	16	20
3. Roopaka	0 1	5	6	7	9	11
4. Jhampa	1 0 0	6	7	8	10	12
5. Tripura	1 0 0	7	8	9	11	13
6. Ata	1 1 0 0	10	12	14	18	22
7. Eka	1	3	4	5	7	9

Note : The symbol U denotes an *anudruta* and has only one aksharakala

From the table we see that the number of *aksharakalas* are twelve for the following *talas* viz. *Khandajati matya*, *Sankeernajati Jhampa* and *Chaturasrajati ata talas*. (None of these however, is a commonly used tala!) While for purposes of *pallavi* singing, perhaps any one of the *talas* could be used, when a song is composed in one tala, it may look strange if it is sung set to another tala, having the same *aksharakalas*-as the emphasis would be at different places. But it is only about a dozen *talas* that have been used widely, the most extensively used being the *Adi tala* which in the above table corresponds to the *chaturasra jati tripura tala*. Thyagaraja has composed 333 songs out of 705 in this tala; among Deekshitar's compositions 133 out of 461 in *adi tala*.

The concept of *dvigunatva* or doubling referred to earlier, is met with in the case of tala also. The six degrees of speed — *Shatkaalas*— form a geometric progression— 1, 1/2, 1/4, 1/8, 1/16, 1/32 i.e., if one note is sung in the first degree of speed, then 2

notes in the same time interval should be sung in the second *kāla*, 4 notes in the third *kāla*, and so on with 32 notes in the sixth *kāla*! Only *Shatkala Govinda Marar* was reputed to have been capable of this feat. Normally, only three *kālas* sung.

Thus the scope for application of mathematical and statistical methods in music is great. In measuring the 'appeal' of the various ragas, or in defining a raga in terms of a series of adjectives like "pleasing", "peaceful", "sweet", etc. use can be made of psychological techniques with statistical analyses. This writer has tried to do some work in this direction and has presented them in some conferences and journals.

In the last two decades, computer methods have been used increasingly in musical research — especially analysis classification, reproduction, experimentation and so on. But this should form the subject matter of a separate paper.

Musicians and music lovers need not fight shy of using mathematical techniques; perhaps mathematics is also as much part of the discipline of music as any other discipline.

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Tāla: A Conceptual and Structural Analysis*

By
Dr. N. RAMANATHAN

The musical systems in India have always been studied with respect to the three aspects—*Svara*, *Tāla* and *Pada*¹. 'Svara' represents all that goes into the melodic part of music while 'Pada' refers to the syllabic part, i.e., the words in songs. 'Tāla' is the temporal framework in which rhythmically organised compositions are set.

Functions of Tāla

Tāla has formed a part of music since ancient times and even today it figures in both the systems of music, namely North Indian (Hindustāni) and South Indian (Karnāṭaka). The use of Tāla is found in three arts, namely, music, drumming and dance.² The last one, dance, is a composite art and in the Indian tradition, it has music and drumming as inseparable limbs. The function of tāla has been stated to be that of measuring music, drumming and dance.³ Further, another function of tāla has been mentioned, which is to bring about coordination between the various limbs of an art say, dance⁴.

Thus we learn of two functions of tāla, one of measuring and the other of coordinating activities. The questions that would normally arise are (a) Why should music (or, for that matter, dance or drumming) be measured? (b) How does tāla bring about coordination between the various limbs of an art? It is perhaps in finding

answers to these questions that we would be able to have an idea of the nature of tāla.

Tāla and Rhythm

We have mentioned earlier that tāla is associated only with rhythmically organised music. In music there are two kinds of structures. One is non-rhythmical, like the "ālāpanai" in the Karnāṭak and the "ālāpa" in dhruvad and the "ālāpa" in the "gatkāri" type of instrumental music in Hindustani music. The other rhythmical kind of structure is found in kṛti, varṇa, niraval, etc. in Karnāṭaka and the khayāl, gat etc., of Hindustāni music. What we mean by "rhythmical" is this; Music consists of a melodic structure built up of units of sound. Each sound unit has a definite duration. The extent of this duration is marked by a period of rest following the sound (however infinitesimally small it may be), or the units are formed by stresses (or pulses) in the sound. If the units thus formed make a perceptible pattern there is rhythm in the melodic line.

Non-rhythmical (ālāpa) structure

— — . — . — — —

Rhythmical structure : (a)

(b)... — ... — ... — ... —

In the second rhythmical structure (b) shown above, the pattern is very clear. However in the first rhythmical structure (a) all the stresses are of equal duration

* Based on the article with the same title published in the Brochure issued on the occasion of the Festival of India 1985-86, by Sangeet Research Academy, a Trust created by I.T.C. Ltd., India.

One can ask how the grouping of fours could be made perceptible. This is done by giving accents on the first stress, the fifth, the ninth and so on.⁵ In such a case however, the melody has to be moulded in such a way as to have an accent at regular intervals. This would greatly restrict the freedom in composing melodic structures. It is in marking this rhythm that we have an external accenting device, namely tāla. Tāla requires certain actions of the hands involving the palm and fingers. These actions are rendered at regularly spaced intervals or at irregularly spaced intervals forming a pattern.

a) melodic stresses	
tāla	1	1	1	1	
b) melodic stresses.
tāla	1	1	1	1	1

Now with the existence of such a device namely tāla, in whatever way the melodic structure be conceived, the fundamental rhythm will be maintained.

Framing time through actions and pauses

However tāla does not merely consist in executing the same acts at regular intervals to mark the rhythm in the melody. Actions of various types are executed with the hands, in particular, with the palms and fingers. By juxtaposing different actions, temporal sections of different durations are formed. With these temporal sections the duration of an entire musical composition and its individual sections are measured while the rhythm is also kept maintained at the same time. It is here that we come to the basic aspect of time in music. Through its stresses the melodic line manifests time and through the actions of the hands tāla

does the same. The manifestation of time takes place only when there are events. Time appears as a chain which links different events separated from one another by periods of rest or absence of events⁶. In fact, but for periods of rest in between actions, time cannot be manifested. In other words, a continuous action with no break or change cannot give the impression of time. This is because, as said above, time itself is regarded as that which has been conceived to establish a relationship between different events or actions. Or we can say that actions marked by periods of rest in between create the feeling of time.

In music we see that the melodic line when infused with stresses creates a more perceptible time than one with fewer and irregularly spaced breaks (as in ālāpa). Similarly, tāla also, through the actions of the hands, literally creates time and in this respect, it is almost a clock. And it is this which measures the melodic line. Thus the time manifested by the melodic stresses is measured by the time created by tāla. Firstly, the temporal aspects of the melodic line and tāla are gripped together by the rhythmic flow (stresses) of the melody, regulated by the actions of tāla. Further, tāla, time measure, measures the entire duration of the melodic line. In ancient music, the entire span of a song was matched by a tāla time span of equal duration. In modern times a section of small duration is repeated a number of times to get a larger time span. This time span presents the framework or canvas on which the melodic line is painted. Perhaps, more than measuring, tāla provides the temporal framework which gives the basic form to the melodic structure.

Link between the flow of melody and the flow of tāla]

For there to be some connection between the melodic flow and the tāla flow, there have to be rhythmic stresses in the melody. If, for instance, we were to render a tāla along with rāga ālāpa, the two will flow without any mutual connection. Even in khayāl singing, quite often, in the beginning of the ālāpa portion, there does not appear to be any sustained link between the tāla line expressed by the tabla and the melodic line.⁶ On the other hand, we have certain forms in music where the melodic line does express a rhythm but there is no tāla rendering along with it. For instance, during tām in Karṇāṭaka, jōḍ in gatkāri and nomtom ālāpa in dhruvad in Hindustani music, there is no rendering of tāla. In these forms rhythms projected through accenting of the ones.

Co-ordinator of activities.

Mention has been made earlier of another function of tāla, namely, that of co-ordinating different activities, which we shall examine now. Take the case where the three arts of dancing, drumming and music are combined in performance. A dance recital consists of the dance executed by the movements of the limbs, accompanied by the playing of a drum (mṛdaṅgam or tablā) and singing. The movement of limbs creates beautiful figures in space, while the drumming produces a pattern of syllables and the singing contributes pleasing melodies. All these are different kinds of actions or events and are of entirely different nature. However, the common characteristic shared by the three is

the rhythmic flow. The steps in the dance the syllabic structure of drum playing and the melodic stresses express rhythmic organisation. At times the rhythmic organisation of all three could be different from one another. But all three are regulated by the same time measure or tāla. Thus the playing of the cymbals (rightly called tālam) in a dance concert marks the actions of the tāla and regulates the dancing, drumming and singing and the attention of all the three performers is directed [towards the cymbal player.⁸ So also in a music concert, as for example, the singing and mṛdaṅgam playing in Karṇāṭaka or the singing and pakhāvaj playing in dhruvad in Hindustani music, are mutually linked by their dependence on tāla. Quite often the drum players provide a rhythm different from that of the melodic line to heighten it by contrast. Here tāla keeps the two independent actions under control. In music itself tāla coordinates the melody and rhythm. Sometimes for melodic reasons, there could be a tendency to extend the duration of a note a trifle more than admissible. Tāla arrests it, acting as the regulator.

We have so far tried to understand the notion of tāla in a rather abstract way. We shall now take concrete examples from the music of various periods to see the practical application of tāla.

Tāla in Music - Historical account

In the earliest system of music, namely, Sāmagāna, there is no mention of tāla. It is only in the later "Gāndharva" that we come across the use of tāla. The Nāṭyaśāstra of Bharata (pre-4th Cent. A.D.) (along with the commentary "Abhinavabhāratī" of

Abhinavagupta, 11th Cent. A.D.), The Dattilam of Dattila (pre-4th Cent. A.D.) and the Saṅgītaratnākara of Śārṅgadeva (13th Cent. A.D.) are the main sources of information on Gāndharva. These works deal with an elaborate and intricate system of tāla. In comparison with the Sāmāgāna which has no tāla basis, the Gāndharva musical forms present a different structural set-up altogether, in which the tāla framework is the dominant aspect. It could be conjectured that prior to Gāndharva, tāla figured only in dance and its introduction into classical music began only with Gāndharva.

Tāla in Gāndharva

Among the different kinds of musical forms in Gāndharva, some varieties called Gītakas exhibit sectional divisions described in terms of tāla structures. The action unit in tāla was referred to by the term *kalā*, and later, by the term *kriyā*⁹. There were different types of *kriyās*. These were classified basically into two groups, sounded (*saśabda*) and soundless (*niḥśabda*). The snapping of two fingers, falling of the right palm (on the left), striking the two palms together, were some of the *saśabda kriyā*-s. Drawing (an outstretched hand inwards with the palm facing up, moving an outstretched palm from left to right, etc.) are *niḥśabda kriyā*-s.¹⁰ As mentioned earlier, a *kriyā* followed by a rest manifests time. This rest adhering to a *kriyā* or intervening between two *kriyā*-s was technically called *laya*.¹¹ In fact it is *laya* or the duration between two *kriyās* which becomes the basic measuring unit.¹² The *kriyā* as well as its duration was referred to by the term *kalā*. *Kalā*-s can be of uniform duration or of differing durations. Normally three kinds of units were used in Gāndharva, namely, *laghu*, *guru* and *pluta* (meaning

short, long and prolated, respectively). When all the *kalā*-s are of uniform duration they will be of the duration of *guru*. These units are given equivalence with the time units used in day today life. 'Mātrā' is the reference unit which is equal to the time taken for uttering five short syllables (e.g. ka. ca, ṭa, ta, pa). A *laghu* is equal to one *mātrā*, a *guru* equal to two and a *pluta* to three *matras*.¹³ Certain basic temporal sections are formed with reference to which music is measured. Some of the basic structures are made up of all the types of units, *laghu*, *guru* and *pluta*. Some others of longer duration are made up uniformly of *guru kalā*-s. These structures are classified into three states, short, medium and long. The short structure called the *ekakala* state normally contains all the types of *kalā*-s, namely *laghu*, *guru* and *pluta*. The medium (*dvikala*) and the long (*catuṣkala*) consist only of *guru kalā*-s. The *kriyā*-s are usually all sounded ones in the *ekakala* state. In the corresponding *dvikala* and *catuṣkala* states, besides the *saśabda kriyā*-s of the *ekakala* state, there are unsounded ones. An example may make this clear. 'Caccatpuṭa' is the name of one of the tāla structures whose time divisions and *kriyā*-s are given below, in the three states.¹⁴

Ekakala	{	time units : S S I S
	{	kriyā-s sk sk sk sk
Dvikala	{	time units S S S S S
	{	kriyā-s nk sk nk sk sk
		S S S
		nk nk sk
Catuṣkala	{	time units : S S S S S
	{	kriyā-s nk nk nk nk nk
		S S S S S S S S S
		nk nk sk nk sk nk nk nk nk
		S S
		nk sk

l = laghu, S = guru, Ś = pluta, sk = saśabda-kriyā, nk = niḥśabda-kriyā.

The short structure is described in terms of its *kala* varieties, namely, *guru-guru-laghu-pluta*. The medium and long structures are given in terms of the number of units (all *gurus*), namely eight *kalā*-s and sixteen *kala*-s respectively. It is also seen that the number of *saśabda kriyā*-s we started with in *Ekakala* remains the same, the additional *kriyā*-s being only *niḥśabda*-s. Thus for a listener the pattern expressed by the sounded beats in *ekakala*, *dvikala* and *catuṣkala*-s will be the same.

It is on the basis of these and other tāla patterns that the melodic sections of the various *gītakas* have been defined. For instance the first section in the *gītaka* called *Rovindaka* is of the duration of ninety-six *kala*-s (equal to six times *catuṣkala Caccatpuṭa*)¹⁵ Within the tāla structure the rhythm in which the melodic line of a *gītaka* expressed itself was four stresses in a *guru kala* (or two in *laghu* and six in *pluta*).¹⁶ In order to regulate the rhythm of the melodic line tāla rendering had to be precise. For this purpose a tāla 'renderer' was present in *Gandharva* who maintained the tāla with the help of cymbals and hand movements and controlled the singer from slipping.¹⁷ There are many other aspects of this tāla system, like *marga* and *graha*, which we shall not go into here.¹⁸

Deśī - talas

While *Gandharva* was the classical music of the period, there was music as a part of drama and dance as well. In these arts music was a subservient limb. For instance, in the dramatic art described by *Bharata* in the *Naṭyaśāstra*, music has a

very important role and figures as "dhruva gana" (songs occurring at various stages in the play). The tāla-s used in *dhruva-gana* were simpler and were influenced by the metre of rhythm of the song text.¹⁹ Again in the musical forms called *prabandha*-s, tālas of similar nature were used. These were known as *Deśī tāla*-s. In these tāla-s three-tier structures are not seen. The structures are short and consist mostly of *laghu kala* and *kala*-s of shorter duration called *druta* and later of even shorter duration called *anudruta*. There was also provision to increase the duration of a *druta* or *laghu* by half its value by adding a pause called *virama*.²⁰

Because of the rather light application, more than one hundred structures of *Deśī tāla*-s are listed. For instance, *Darpaṇa tāla - 0 0 S* (*druta druta guru*) is one. In these forms different kinds of actions were not employed as found in *Gandharva*. Only one *saśabda kriyā* was mainly employed, and extended in its duration according to the *kala* (*druta*, *laghu* etc., it manifested).²¹ In *Prabandha*-s, it is not clear what rhythm was expressed, by the melodic line. Sometimes it appears that the duration of *laghu* was slightly extended to accommodate more melodic stresses. In the *Deśī* the standardising of units, *laghu* etc., is not done against a *matra* but against time units used in day-to-day life *Kṣaṇa*, *Lava*, *Kaṣṭha*, etc.²²

Further it is in the *dhruva* songs that we find for the first time the tāla framework of a melodic line being formed by the repetition of a basic tāla structure number of times. This cyclic notion of tāla continues till the present time.

Accounts of tala-s used in dhruva gana are found in the Nāṭyaśāstra and the Bharatabhaṣya of Nanyadeva (12th Cent. A.D.). Deśī tala-s are described in many works starting from the Manasollasa of Someśvara (12th Cent. A.D.) upto Saṅgīta-parijata (17th Cent. A.D.). However the descriptions of tala used in Karnataka and Hindustani music are not met with in any work till the 19th century. But there is much room for surmising that the deśī tala system gradually acquired classical elements. For instance, the duration of time units (e.g. laghu) increased and extra actions were introduced to sustain the increased duration of time units.

Modern period : Karnataka System

In Karnataka music there are tala-s in which all the kriya-s are of uniform duration and also tala-s in which the duration of kriya-s is not uniform. For instance, take Ādi tala and Miśracapu tala. In the former the eight kriya-s are all of uniform duration whereas in the latter among the three kriya-s the first kriya has a duration one and a half times that of the next two. However the differing time units in miśra-

capu have not been given any nomenclature such as laghu, guru and pluta as in Gandrva. Though the terms laghu and druta occur in present day Karnataka music, they have lost their ancient connotation.

In the talas having kriya-s of uniform duration the measuring unit is called akṣara (literally syllable). An akṣara is the time which elapses between two kriya-s. However the duration of an akṣara is not standardised against any time unit of day to day life. Hence the duration of an akṣara becomes too flexible.

Among the tala-s with time units of uniform duration, the three-tier system of ekakala, dvikala, catuṣkala and even higher figures is in vogue. The kriya-s in use today are (a) the falling of the right palm on the thigh or the left palm called a taṭṭu or ghatam or beat (b) finger movements starting with the little finger and (c) the falling of the hand with the palm facing upwards called a viccu or visarjitam or wave. The last two are unsounded actions. Eg :

	Ādi-tala		Ekakala (8 akṣaras)					
Aksaras	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Kriya-s	sk	nk	nk	nk	sk	nk	sk	nk
	beat	little finger	ring finger	middle finger	beat	wave	beat	wave

When this tala is rendered in dvikala and catuṣkala etc, the time units and kriya-s are simply duplicated and quadrupled. In talas of the class of miśracapu (with units of varying durations) only one kind of action namely, the beat, is used and the differing states ekakala, dvikala, etc. do not obtain here.

The songs are set to a tala framework formed by the cyclical recurrence of a basic tala. And in the music, apart from composed songs, there are melodic passages which are shaped during the performance. Neraval and kalpanasvara are examples and these are performed to tala. In both neraval and kalpanasvara different sections of short to long durations are sung. Their duration conforms to a exact number of cycles of the tala.

The melodic line expresses itself in many kinds of rhythm, which is called its gati or naḍai (gait). Normally 4, 3, 5, 7 or 9 stresses or their multiples can occur in one unit duration (akṣara) of a tala. The normal gait however consists of four stresses to an akṣara.

Kriya-s :	sk				nk							
Bols :	dha	dhin	dhin	dha	dha	dhin	dhin	dha	dha	tin	tin	ta
Matras :	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
	sk											
	ta	dhin	dhin	dha								
	13	14	15	16								

The kriya-s of hand are of only two types, a beat called tali and a wave called khali. The time unit is Matra which is again of a flexible duration like the akṣara in Karnataka music. There are many basic

Hindustani Music :

The tala system in Hindustani music indicates a slightly different tradition. Apart from the usual mode of reckoning tala, by actions of the hand, the actual manifestation of tala is done by certain syllables produced on the drum "tabala." These syllables are called "Bol-s" and the act of playing them on the tabala is called "ṭheka". In fact the total duration value of a tala is equal not to the number of kriya-s of hand but to the syllabic groupings (bol-s) played on the tabla. For instance, in the most popular tala "tīn tala", the kriya-s are only four, namely two saṣabdakriya-s followed by one niṣabdakriya, followed by one more saṣabdakriya. But there are sixteen syllabic groupings prescribed for this tala and hence its total value is sixteen matra-s.

tala structures which are cyclically repeated over the entire length of the musical piece.

There are tala-s in which the syllable groupings are not of uniform duration, For example.

Dīpcandī														
Kriya-s :	sk	sk			nk				sk					
Bols :	dha	dhin	-	di	dha	dhin	-	ta	tin	-	dhā	dha	dhin	-
Matra-s :	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14

In this tala there are fourteen matra-s while the bol-s are only ten.

The rhythm of the melodic line in Hindustani is also varied as it is in Karnata-

taka music, namely the occurrence of the gait of four, five, six, etc. In concerts of classical music elaborate song structures are not used. Mostly, a performance consists

not of songs but of the shaping of the melodic structures afresh. This is popularly referred to as improvisation. In forms like Khayal, non-rhythmical alapa is also rendered to the accompaniment of tala executed on the tala.

The purpose of this article has not been to give an introduction to the talas used in Indian music but to explain the concept of tala itself that can be gathered from musical practice during the various periods of history. The function of tala has been one of regulating the rhythmic flow of the melodic line and providing a temporal framework or form to music. In order to perform this function the repeated ren-

dering of actions of specific durations is required. These actions manifest units of time of uniform or varying duration. The rhythmic expression of melody within the framework of tala is regulated. The total value of the tala duration measures the duration of the music and provides the temporal background to the progression of the melody. The execution of tala is seen to be done varyingly by hand movements, cymbal playing and later by drum instruments. While in Gandharva the tala of a song indicated the linear arrangement of temporal units which matched the duration of the entire song, in the subsequent systems a short time span repeated over the duration of the song came into practice.

NOTES

1. Nāṭyaśāstra, 28, 11ab; Dattilam verse No. 3.
2. Saṅgītaratnākara, 5, 2.
3. Ibid., 5, 3.
4. Abhinavabharatī on Nāṭyasastra, 31, 1, p. 152, In. 9 to 11.
5. Victor Zuckerkandl would however not agree with my statement. His stand is clear, from the following sentence from his book 'Sound and Symbol.' p. 168. "Now we see the wrongness of the doctrine that musical time, that is, the grouping of beats into measures, springs from differentiation of accents. There is no need for externally derived accents in order to distinguish weak and strong beats from one another and thus establish the metrical pattern."
6. See Kālasamuddēśa of Bhartrhari's Vākyapādiya, verses, 4, 5, 27, 28.
7. cf. Article "Musalman, Gajal, Kavvalicur Khyal" by Acarya Brhaspati in Sangeet (monthly), Jan-Feb. 1976 Khayala Aṅka, p. 63.
8. See note 4 above.
9. In Nāṭyaśāstra and Dattilam, the term 'Kriya' does not occur. However in the commentary Abhinavabharati and later books, the term is used profusely.
10. Nāṭyasastra 31, 30-37. Saṅgītaratnākara 5, 4-10.

11. Saṅgītaratnākara, 5, 43-44.
12. Abhinavabharatī on Nāṭyaśāstra 31, 6, p. 154, In. 6.
13. Saṅgītaratnākara 5, 16-17.
14. Ibid. 5 28-32.
15. Ibid. p. 100-101.
16. Abhinavabharatī on Nāṭyasastra, 31, 157.
17. Saṅgītaratnākara, 5, 38-39.
18. Mārga indicated the act of extending (successive doubling) of the duration of the kriya-s of a tālā without the addition of any kriyā. Graha is the practice of commencing the song slightly earlier or later than the time of commencement of the tālā execution. It also suggested the syncopated movement of the melody.
19. Abhinavabharatī on Nāṭyaśāstra 32, 252, p. 345 in. 14-15.
20. Kalānidhi commentary on Saṅgītaratnākara 5, 261-262.
21. Saṅgītaratnākara, verse Nos. 683 and 684, p. 117.
22. Ibid. 638-641, pp. 111-112.
23. Saṅgītopanisatsāroddhāra of Sudhākaraśāstra (1350 A.D.) is perhaps the first to give syllabic groupings for tāla-s. See the second chapter of this treatise.

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1. Dattilam of Dattilamuni Ed. by K. Sambasiva Sastri, pub. in the Trivandrum Sanskrit series, Trivandrum, 1930.
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3. Saṅgītaratnākara of Śarāṅgadeva with the commentaries Kalānidhi of Kallinātha and Sudhākara of Simhābhūpala Vol. III Ed. by Pandit S. Subrahmanya Sastri pub. in the Adyar Library Series by Adyar Library, Madras, 1951.
4. Sound and Symbol by Victor Zuckerkandl, Bollingen Series, XLIV, Princeton University Press, U.S.A. 1973.

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What is Music ?

By

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Claude Levi-Strauss has suggested that music holds the key to the progress of the various human disciplines.¹ It is true that Tyagaraja's songs have touched and shaped many lives in South India. Despite the clamour of modernity, they are still vigorous enough to continue turning people's sensibilities and to serve as a touchstone for authentic *bhakti*. A song is more than a verbal text set to notes; its life is in the rapport it establishes with its listener, "and the intonation it imposes upon his voice and the changing and durable images it leaves on his memory."² It is the empatternment of the material self by an idea; it is an occasion in which spirit orchestrates attentive matter. Beethoven was in basic harmony with Tyagaraja's view of music as an inlet to the sacred: "Music is the one incorporeal entrance into the higher world of knowledge, which comprehends man-

kind but which mankind cannot comprehend." The *Taittiriya Upanisad*, if interpreted liberally, also speaks of the spiritual experience such as that found in the "nectar-sea" of Tyagaraja's music: *rasovai sah rasam hyevayam labdhva anandi bhavati*. That (Brahman) is indeed the essential juice: one is blissful having realized that"³

Tyagaraja's mystical music functions for those enamoured of it as an egress from the mundane, and as an inlet to transcendence. An exquisite "twilight zone" interfacing the material world and the numinous, it evokes qualities of consciousness associated with contemplation and devotion in those who appreciate it, and it functions as a ritual, focussing the mind on the divine, formally turning the listener inward, to listen to deep subtleties of creator and creation.

Notes

1. Claude Levi-Strauss, *The Raw and the Cooked*, p. 18.
2. Jorge Luis Borges, *Labyrinths* (New York: New Directions, 1964), p. 213.
3. Taittiriya Upanisad, 11.7.1 For a discussion of *rasa* as a religious and aesthetic term, see T. P. Ramachandran, *The Indian Philosophy of Beauty* (Madras University of Madras, 1980), Vol. II, pp. 35-36.

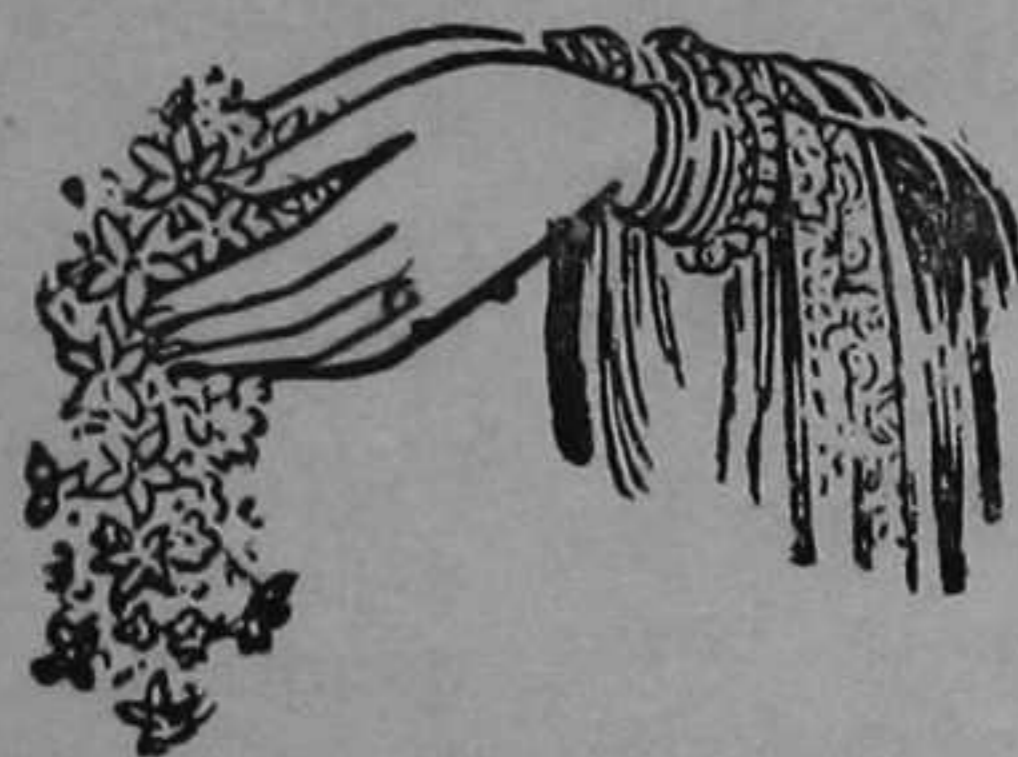
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Narasimha" is in Palaranjani (not Pala-
manjari as expounded by Balamurali-
"Sathaleni" is in Samantham and not
Naganandini as sung in the G.N.B. School

(Continued on page 23)

Three-day Bombay Seminar on Thumri

By

SAKUNTALA NARASIMHAN

The Indian Musicological Society and Bombay University's department of music, in association with the Asian Arts and Cultural Centre, organised a three-day seminar on 'Thumri - traditions and trends' at Bombay from January 16 to 18, 1987. With participants drawn from all parts of the country, the proceedings proved as lively and interesting as they were informative and fruitful. In fact, even after a marathon session from 9.30 a.m. to 8 p.m. on the concluding day, there seemed to be a lot still to be said and discussed on the subject enough to fill two more days of deliberations.

Miss Prabha Atre and Sri Mohan Nadkarni presented papers on the opening session. The latter brought to his presentation his experience of three and a half decades as a keen listener and critic, in assessing the trends in thumri in the second half of this century. Dr. Vinayak Purohit, who began the sessions on the second day, presented a panorama of the historical, political, economic and social influences that shaped our cultural ethos, particularly in the post-industrial revolution period, while Sri Divanjee who took the stage next, presented some very evocative and rarely heard thumris. Dr. Sitanshu Ray from Calcutta highlighted the influence of thumri on Rabindra Sangeet with a few compositions of Tagore, while Dr. Vidyadhar Vyas who heads the department of music at Bombay university offered a beau-

tiful presentation of Marathi Natyasangeet vis-a-vis thumri, showing the close parallelism in the tunes employed.

Dr. Durga of Madras and myself were asked to deal with the parallels between padam and javali on the one hand and thumri on the other, in the Carnatic and Hindustani systems respectively. This covered the place of improvisation in the two genres, the development of *raga-ang* and the thematic similarities in lyrics.

Eminent musician scholar Pandit K. G. Ginde's contribution to the seminar was on Hori and allied forms, with apt demonstrations of a number of enjoyable examples. Smt. Sarala Bhide of Bombay and Sri Alok Chatterjee of Calcutta spoke (and sang) to highlight the styles of individual thumri performers, while Pandit V. R. Athavale of Bombay and Dr. A. K. Sen of Bhopal concentrated on theoretical presentations, the former on the Agra gharana and the latter on the devotional element in thumris.

The final day's presentations included a paper on folk music and thumri, with demonstrations of tunes in both, by Dr. Sushila Pohankar, an exposition of 'Laggi chanti' rhythmic finale that is characteristic in thumri performance by Pandit Nikhil Ghosh and his son Nayan Ghosh on the tabla, and an enjoyable demonstration of *taleem* (training techniques) in thumri singing by Dr. Anita Sen, formerly of Jaipur.

The seminar thus covered both theoretical and practical aspects of thumri tradition from a wide range of perspectives. There was also a session devoted to a presentation of very old and rare recordings of thumris by past-masters, some of them dating back to the last decade of the nineteenth century, which gave the participants a valuable opportunity to juxtapose past styles with present trends.

Altogether, the seminar was a rewarding exercise in exchange of ideas and gave us all insights into areas other than our own individual perspectives as performers or musicologists. It also highlighted the underlying fact that, in terms of universal language of communication like music there is much that is common between the north, south, east and west, notwithstanding regional variations in culture, language and customs.

Credit for this fruitful musical-musicological event must go to Sri R. C. Mehta of the Indian Musicological Society,

Baroda, who conceived and planned the seminar and its contents.

One wished that the seminar had also sought and arrived at a consensus regarding some of the issues raised in the course of the deliberations—for instance, on whether thumri should be restricted to conventional 'rakti' ragas or whether, in the name of evolution, it would be acceptable to adopt non-conventional ragas from the classical genre too. This would have helped codify and evaluate trends vis-a-vis tradition, and sift fissiparous fads from genuine innovations. If there were more such events organised to bring musicians and musicologists together on a common platform, it could do nothing but good.

With Carona Sahu Industries sponsoring the seminar, we had one more example of a business house extending patronage for the classical arts—a heartening trend indeed.

(Continued from page 21)

BOOK REVIEWS

"Abhimanamu is in Andhali with a higher ga rather than the version of Smt. Brinda (with a Kanada flavour). "Enthamuddho is utterly different here, from the present corrupt one. The Ganavaridhi Kriti "Dayachoor" has a different flavour from the Mudikondaa version now current. "Nadaloludai" is in a chaste Carnatic version here unlike the Hindustani mode at present in vogue.


Other signal merits of the book are an explanatory note on the phrases in the aga and the clarity of sahitya, tala, and eduppu in the notation; the current practice in vogue; the correct attitude and innate bhava implied in the song and some illumination to passages in the song. A scholarly Foreword by T.S. Balakrishna Sastrigal and a preface by the Editor, S. Parthasarathi, enhance the value of the volume.

N. R. BHUVARAGAN



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of the creative force**

And so is technology — a reflection of
the creative spirit that moves man out of
his limited world to explore the limitless
possibilities of the universe.

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Cultural Scene in Bombay

By

Dr. SULOCHANA RAJENDRAN

One never tires of listening to Tanjavur Sankara Iyer, the composer-musician who is incidentally an interesting speaker too. His lecture-demonstrations carry a punch, a purpose and perception and one always returns enlightened. His recent one was on "Sangeeta Dharmam", an all-encompassing 'ocean', which he convincingly capsuled in a 2-hour lec-dem at the Mini of the Shanmukhananda Sabha.

Sankara Iyer struck the right chord to open with: "How to sing?" Very basic, though how baffling it could become if not properly practised! Therein he employed his 'vocal dharma'—the code of singing (that envelops instrumental playing too) which brought out the very soul of the Raga, the Sahitya, where swaras remained not on the arohana-avarohana periphery but each acquired a functional character through microtonal nuances, and Sahitya rose above mere words echoing the 'bhava'. He examined how a fusion of sangeeta and sahitya was essential if music were to progress from the ephemeral to ethereal and on to a spiritual level. How such a fusion held valid in the four-level musical evolution—emotional, devotional, traditional and classical—and how the last embraced the other three levels, made an interesting study.

The probe into cutcheri dharma as against 'loukika' dharma was interesting too, in that he laid bare the aesthetic

grandeur of the former, the depth of involvement and extemporisation and the freedom that a performer enjoyed. (He, however, did not overlook 'the abuse' and struck a note of caution too.) With copious illustrations, he enunciated in detail the alapana dharma, the niraval-svara phases; and kriti renditions which comprehensively brought out the cascading beauty of Sangathies. While 'elaborating the 'code', Sankara Iyer emphasised the prominence to be given to bhava emanating from the fusion of sangeeta and sahitya. Certainly a dig at those who claimed that melody was all supreme and and lyrics only 'incidental.'

His comment on making the performing forum a practising session drawing liberally from 'sister' system or overstepping the voice dharma to reach an 'intellectual high' had a punch not far from true. Poor attendance at such a highly educative session was of course disconcerting. The Sabha should make it obligatory at least on its Vidyalaya students to attend.

During its December '86 session, the Shanmukhananda Sabha offered a conventional cutcheri and a contemporary mini-orchestra. An artists trained under many stalwarts, Padmalochana Nagarajan struck a blend of many styles and proved herself a

fine performer. Her voice had power and pliancy and her vidwat was tempered with melodic elegance and emotive touches. Her alapana in Purvikalayani, Bhairavi and Saveri revealed an innate relish and a methodicity in approach that made articulations clear and crisp.

Padmalochana was selective with the Ragas, Kritis and Talas to make a pleasing variety and her repertoire covered a wide spectrum:—“Maha Ganapathim” (Kanada), “Ninnuvina” (Purvikalyani), “Swaminathena” (Brindavana Saranga), “Sri Parthasarathe” (Bhairavi) etc., to cite a few. The trikalam and tisram were employed in the ragamalika swaras giving the Adi tala Pallavi in Saveri an imaginative twist.

Young violonist Usha impressed with her poise and polish. Her maturity in alapana and swara handling was delectable. Competent was L. R. Ganesh on the Mridangam. His thani in Khanda Tripata spoke of his mettle.

* * *

“Collective expression” which is being consciously propagated in dance in lieu of solo seems to have caught up with the musical stream too. For the Violin-Venu Veena by Vijayalakshmi, Mala and Jayanthi provided hearty entertainment. While the Venu-Veena-Violin of yesteryear by Ramani, Venkataraman and Lalgudi Jayaraman, wore off after the initial novelty owing to rasikas’ reluctance to accept anything “tailored”, the audience appreciated the youngsters’ efforts at harmonious expression. With Lalgudi’s daughter in the lead and Sikkil junior providing enchanting aside and Jayanthi cautiously adopting a vocalised style, the ensemble proved their individual mettle as

well as their team work. If Vijayalakshmi exuded a quiet calm and sweet poignance in Mohanam and Shanmukhapriya, Mala fluently gyrated over the octaves leaving Jayanthi to lend a deflective depth.

* * *

As if to strike as an exponent of the consolidation of the ‘code’ expounded by Tanjavur Sankara Iyer, floutist K. S. Gopalakrishnan rose to great heights when he performed for the Sabha in February. It was music sublime, with a superb technique. From the opening Viriboni Varnam to the close, he cast a spell. More. His ‘saukhyam’ lingered long. Heartening that he values music as an art and plays with insight, introspection and devotion.

KSG’s controlled blowing, subdued and elongated pauses, silken skeins of swaras with deft technical trimming evoked the finest response from his accompanists T. Rukmini couldn’t have bettered her performance that day. Her soulful and inspiring accompaniment heightened the flautist’s presentation. Gambhira Nattai, an inherently magnificent mode, to exude coy elegance was something that this pair accomplished with ease. Sri, Pantuvarali and Kambhoji were the other ragas they excelled in. They played towering pieces like “Sri Varalakshmi”, “Paripalaya” and “Evarimaata” with touching interpretation.

Bhaktavatsalam who normally displays his tonal power on the mridangam revealed his capacity for elegant stride and soft tone. Pairing with N. H. Jayaraman (Kanjira), he improvised a complex thani.

* * *

The same accompanists were a bit ‘loud’ the previous evening when they accompanied P. S. Narayanaswamy. Not

only was overamplification a factor that raised the decibels, but the performers too seemed to be under some strain, the vocalist straining to deliver the ‘best’ of his wares through a none-too-cooperative voice, and the accompanists responding loudly. Nevertheless, the vocalist’s vidwat was not missed. His musicianship scored over voice constriction in Ritigowlai and Sankarabharanam. “Dwaitamu Sukhama” and the Tisra Jhampa Khanda Nadai Pallavi came off as intellectual exercises, presented with imagination.

* * *

Between the accompanist role he plays and the solo he serves, one finds a world of difference in violinist Lalgudi Jayaraman. To which has been added of late, a new role as the Jugalbandi partner which makes him a ‘stylist’ of a different metier. And one had the taste of the last two when he played for the annual fete of the Bharatiya Music & Arts Society and Sriraman Investments’ inauguration programme.

The true Lalgudi spirit as a musician par excellence emerges when the maestro plays solo. His imagination, innovation and creativity flow uninhibited when he is on his own. And his surrender to the Muse is total. Such was the experience when he played with his son G. J. R. Krishnan finely dueting with him, for Bharatiya.

Lalgudi’s own Varnam in Bahudari put the pair on a high pedestal where the father-son remained throughout spinning melodiously through alapana, kriti and swaras (sorry, niraval was woefully neglected). Mohanam from father and Kirvani from son flowed with intuitive depths and harmony. The swara sallies to

“Rara Rajeeva lochana Rama” were a treat while in Kirvani Khanda Tripata Pallavi they took us on a Ragamalika swara ‘cruise’. Vellore Ramabhadran has almost become a ‘limb’ of Lalgudi solo and his soft and stylish strokes enhanced the beauty of the concert.

The same could not be said of Lalgudi when he teamed with Hindusthani flautist Hariprasad Chaurasia in a jugalbandi. Though he proved that ‘integration on melodic plane’ was not after all that impossible with the necessary ‘accommodation’ and ‘sacrifice’, it was he who had to ‘do’ them both. Restrained from the normal wealth of graces which he also is capable of ‘coaxing’, Lalgudi employed meends, counterpointing and octaval ‘ploughback’, which are just a child’s play to him, to match Chaurasia’s ponderous style with long, pregnant pauses, and together they developed Hamsadhwani now entrenched in the Hindustani system. The Taans were the plane where both could communicate and blend with ease, grace in gait and lilt in pace. The simple Gat structure adhering to one form of Tala, Adi, helped them achieve synchrony. Zakhir Hussain, the inimitable Tabla wizard, played with immense alacrity and abandon harmonising with Ramesh’s Mridangam.

The ‘skilled’ reciprocity the quartet presented ensured to jugalbandi the status of a classical variant, a variety entertainment. The same, one was convinced, could never become a staple system of musical presentation.

* * *

Kalaimamani S. R. Kasturi has been over half a century on the stage. To see him in

the same role on celluloid was quite a different experience, with playback singing provided by Sangeeta Kalanidhi Dr. S. Ramanathan.

To cast in celluloid the life of the Saint and to record for posterity some of his divine musical games is no doubt a challenge to any producer. And to capsule the 'Sangeeta Sagara' in a 60-minute documentary only makes it more hazardous. The 'Thyaga Brahmam' the Films Division offered, scripted and produced by R. Krishna Mohan could therefore be taken as a memento. The photography highlighting some of the authentic background at Tiruvayyaru and the Tanjavur belt is by Gangadhar.

The quiet master-and melodist-mentor Krishnaswamy of the Shanmukhananda Sangeeta Vidyalaya made history again, when two of his kid-chelas, probably the youngest on the line, Ranjani and Gayatri

were presented in their debut at the Asthika Samaj. Their prodigious talent apart, the master has trained their nimble fingers to traverse with vocal certainty on the stringed path. Confident and unruffled they played with musical instincts and imagination. Gayatri's Kharaharapriya had a sweet grace we rarely come across even among experienced artistes not to speak of young freshers. Being trained in vocal too (Ranjani is said to have greater flourish in vocal), the sisters will go a long way if they pursue with the same diligence and devotion and not be 'bitten' by the 'performing bug'.

* * *

The month of January as usual reverberated with Aradhana and wherever there was an association or sabha, Saint Tyagaraja was paid homage. Shanmukhananda got up a 4-day anjali to the saint. In February, the Sabha paid tribute to the Sangeeta Pitamaha.



Cultural Scene in Karnataka

By

T. B. NARASIMHACHAR

The notable event during December 1986 was the annual awards function arranged by the State Sangita Nritya Academy on 12-12-1986 at the Ravindra Kalakshetra to V. Ramaratnam (Carnatic vocalist of Mysore), A. V. Krishnamachar (violinist-Bangalore), Smt. Lalitha Ubhaya-kar (Hindusthani vocalist), N. G. Kulkarni (Tabla), Guru Tanjore K. P. Kittappa Pillai (Bharathanatyam), K. B. Madhava Rao (Bharatha Natyam-Guru), Bangalore Krishna Bhagavathar (Harikatha), Kumara Venkanna (Art critic). Each of them received a cash award of Rs. 5,000/- and the title 'Karnataka Kala Tilaka'.

The new year, 1987, saw the Karnataka Gana Kala Parishat hold its annual (17th) Musicians' Conference and Music Festival at Bellary at the suggestion of the State Government. It was presided over by Sangita Bhooshanam M. A. Narasimhachar, a senior alumnus of the music college at Chidambaram. He had the benefit of being trained by such stalwarts of yesteryears as Tanjavur Ponniah Pillay, Tiger Varadachar, T. S. Sabhesa Iyer and Sathur Krishna Iyengar in the Gurukulavasa system. As many as 120 artistes participated in the Hindusthani and Carnatic music concerts. Sisir Kona Dhar Chowdhary from Shanthiniketan and Dr. Rajeev Taranath of Bangalore participated in a rare jugalbandi of violin and Sarod

in the Hindusthani medium. The conference president gave the inaugural concert. The programmes included a Sugam Sangita recital. Amongst the visiting artistes were Chengalpattu Ranganathan of Madras (disciple of Alathur Brothers), K. Vageesh (Delhi) and Dr. M. Balamurali Krishna.

M. A. Narasimhachar led the lecture-demonstration sessions in the mornings with a talk on 'Ahiri'. He said that in ancient days compositions in Ahiri were sung in Sri Vaishnava temples before sunrise. He sang a few krithis by Syama Sastri, Dikshitar and Tyagaraja to bring home the beauty and nuances of this raga. Vainika V. Venkatasubba Rao spoke on 'Chitta Taanas' and emphasised their importance in Veena play. He demonstrated the point through 'Nata' raga.

Dr. R. Satyanarayana of Mysore spoke on medieval Indian music with its relevance to the Carnatic system. His son Nandakumar sang some songs in illustration of it. M. Cheluvayaswami spoke on the underlying theme of 'Bhakthi' in all the krithis of Sri Tyagaraja, including 'Bantu Reeti' (Hamsanadam), 'Chalimini Jalajaksha' (Yadukula kamboji), Kalaharanamelara (Suddha Saveri), and 'Yendundi Vedalitivo' (Durbar). Speaking on 'Thiruppugazh' B. M. Sundaram of Pondicherry Akashwani, said the

verses did not have 'Pallavi' and 'Anupallavi' and were set to 'Chanda tala'. Most of them are in chaste Tamil known also as 'Kadai Tamil'. Out of 16,000 compositions by Arunagirinathar only 1,300 have been traced. The compositions have been dedicated to Lord Subrahmanya (Muruga). The Talas introduced are intricate. While Chengalpattu Ranganathan sang some in illustration thereof, Dr. Balamuralikrishna in his comments said they were unique and had a great significance in our Tala system and made an impact on listeners. Veteran Titta Krishna Iyengar gave a lecture-demonstration on Pallavi. Dr. Balamuralikrishna led a group of youngsters in the singing of some krithis of Bhadrachala Ramadas in an evocative way and in the traditional style in vogue in the East and west Godavari districts of Andhra Pradesh: 'Ramuni Nammina Diname' Sudhinamu' (Kapi), 'Taraka Mantramu' (Dhanyasi), 'Yetu botivo Rama' (Anandabhairavi), 'Yemira Rama' Rama jogi Mandu' and 'Pahi Rama Prabhu.' Sushila Raghupathi and her colleagues illustrated some rare and unpublished krithis of Mysore Vasudevachar. Led by M. A. Narasimbachar there was a group singing of Tyagaraja and Purandaradasa compositions by about 50 artistes. At the valedictory function Dr. Balamuralikrishna pleaded with the State Government to afford financial assistance to artistes in their old age. He sang couplets in praise of the southern states.

Aradhanas Galore

In recent years the Aradhana of Saint Raghavendraswami has added to the number of Aradhanas that are being celebrated during the month of January by almost

every institution connected with music, as there are a number of Brindavans established in Bangalore. The end result is that the various local artistes are having a heyday of concerts and these Aradhanas spill over into the months of February and March. But the matter for consideration is that these annual Aradhanas are turning out to be an extension of the usual monthly professional programmes for the entertainment of the audience, in which the artistes, young and old, ladies and gents, give reign to the display of their virtuosity instead of paying musical homage to those great composers, who were minstrels of God and poured forth their devotion to God 'in profuse strains of unpremeditated songs of devotion'. The devotional part is invariably found missing. The audience also seems to have compromised with this approach of the performers. They are rarely allowed to develop a mood of devotion and solemnity, in the face of our incorrigible percussionists going the whole hog in producing reverberating, 'en masse' sound. The festival at the 'Sanctum Sanctorum' at Tiruvaiyyaru seems to be setting the pattern for the organisers and artistes in other parts of the country, by and large. Of course the inevitable 'Goshti Ganam' of 'Pancha Ratna Krithis' is there at all these functions, often turning out to be cacophony with umpteen nonaligned voices crying hoarse the texts (often with printed or manuscript texts before them). Thus the very objects of these annual functions are often defeated. The Purandaradasa Aradhana at Hampi and the Tyagaraja Aradhana at Srirangapatna on the banks of the river Cauvery gain some significance. But at Hampi three different organisers vied for public attention at the same venue

on different days. One cannot help wondering how much more edifying it would have been if all these organisers had pooled their resources to celebrate the Aradhana on Pushya Bahula Amavasya the day on which the saint is said to have attained Samadhi. Even here the professional approach prevailed.

Classical Arts and Youth

During the week, 27th January-2nd February 1987 'SPIC-MACAY' (Bangalore chapter) arranged what was called 'FEST (ST) at various educational centres in Bangalore, Suratkal and Mysore, in pursuance of its objective of 'promoting Indian classical Music and Culture amongst Youth.' The current festival was co-sponsored by 'Philips India'. The artistes who participated were Smt. Samyukta Panigrahi (Odissi), Dr. N. Rajam (Hindusthani violin), T. V. Sankaranarayanan (Carnatic vocal), Kadari Gopalanath (Carnatic-Saxophone), Pandit Jasraj (Hindusthani vocal) and Pandit Rajiv Taranath (Hindusthani-Sarod). Young people were intended to be the main beneficiaries of this series but the general music lovers also took advantage of the programmes by their favourite artistes. In particular, the vocal recital by Pandit Jasraj was glorious and had a packed hall. Dr. Rajam, in addition to a violin solo gave a LEC-DEM which did attract and educate. She took up a Khayal in that popular Raga Bhimpalas (Abheri of the Carnatic system) to explain its set-up of *Sthayi Alap, Antara*, etc., demonstrating each facet on the violin, in her inimitable 'Gayaki' technique, with its vibrant, meandering movements. This made one feel that the objective of SPIC-MACAY can be more purposefully achieved, if they arrange, invariably, such

LEC-DEMS to supplement the concerts. Recently Ustad Violyat Khan, the eminent Sitar Maestro, is reported to have exhorted people: For Heaven's sake, do not take classical music to the streets. This is very valid and significant whatever our political leaders may have to say about it. Appreciation of any classical art medium can only result from thorough understanding of its format. Youth may be said to readily appreciate and fall for ready-made art forms packed in glittering covers. Not all popular or successful artistes can explain their art to lay people.

Seminar on Sugam Sangit

By including 'Sugam Tangit' within the purview of its patronage, the State Sangita Nritya Acahemy has given it a boost and this form of musical entertainment is gaining ground in Karnataka in recent years. The Academy had arranged a two-day Seminar on Sugam Sangit during the middle of February. Sri Shivamogga Subbanna, a leading exponent and member of the Academy's Governing Body, coordinated the discussions in which many artistes participated, though outstation representatives did not turn up. It was unanimously agreed that 'Sugam Sangit' of today is a sophisticated form of what was already in vogue as 'Bhava Geethe' (mood music) in this state to present the poetic outpourings in Kannada by eminent poets of Karnataka. The need for forming an Academic controlling body or 'Sugam Sangit Parishat' was agreed upon. The speakers dealt with the various aspects of the subject and many from among the audience participated in the Seminar. The meeting paid homage to the memory of

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Culture & Music

By

K. RAJAGOPALAN. M.Sc.. Dip. Mus.

Human culture has yielded many art forms, the principal and finest manifestation being music. The social concept of Aristotle and the West as applied to the seclusion theory of the Indian sages inspired different approaches to this extempore art. Harmony and orchestration in group singing had its echo in social democracy where the individual is a contributing unit to the total structure in all its consummate beauty. This form struck root in the West.

Indian Music aimed directly at linking man with his creator as the only worthy pursuit in life. Mundane thoughts were ignored. The philosophy and culture of Indian music has no serious concern for the principle of harmony even as introspection envisages only isolation. The less sophisticated devotional group music, light and social in character, carried things of harmony with it, perhaps to facilitate popularisation.

Indian philosophy has looked upon music comprised of song, dance and instruments as serving as a vehicle, by no means an end in itself, for emancipation. The eternal sound 'OM' had its birth in the union of life force with fire and expanded into the seven notes in an octave. These seven notes are considered by the Yogis to have their origin in the specific vital centres

of the body like navel, heart, throat, tongue-nose. etc. Practice of melody is viewed as an exercise in Yoga; the melodic system and worship of Lord Shiva, the destroyer, as the embodiment of Melody.

Evolution and renaissance in art in the long run resulted in the elevation of the status and quality of music as a useful branch of Indian philosophy - Gandharva Veda-aimed at stirring the higher instincts of man. The vehicle of devotion moves majestically on the celestial road of melody to its destined goal of salvation. Jayadeva of Ashtapadhi fame, Kabirdas, Meera, Ramadass, Tulsidas, Surdas, Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, the Alwars and Nayanmars of the south, to quote only a few, attained salvation through music. Saint Thyagaraja stresses that music without devotion is a body without life and ceases to have independent existence *sans* the breath of devotion. His entire life was one long and ecstatic symphony with the fusion of his ruling passion Rama.

The maturity of Indian music is traceable to several centuries before the Christian era when this prosperous Bharata Desa adopted a unified system of scientific music with *identical traditions*. Saint Jayadeva, hailing from Kalinga, with his immortal Ashtapadhis, was a household name

enshrined in the heart of every Indian - a testimony to the unity of melodic India.

Thanks to the cultural impact of Muslim rule in Northern India, music of the North underwent modifications retaining the melodic pattern. In contrast the original unalloyed system of Indian music dug its roots firmly south of the Vindhyas, standing out gloriously in its present form known as Carnatic Music.

The end of the 18th Century is an era of renaissance in art in Europe and India. Giants like Beethoven, Mozart, etc. in Europe laid the foundation for a new era in western music. It was also during this period that Carnatic Music witnessed the dawn heralded by the advent of Purandara-dasa and the great musical trinity of composers, Saint Thyagaraja, Muthuswami Dikshitar and Syama Sastrigal.

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late P. Kalinga Rao a pioneer who is almost a father figure to the contemporary exponents of Sugam Sangit.

Ashtavadhana in Kannada

For the first time in living memory an unique programme was the 'Ashtavadhana in Kannada' by Sri Josyam Sadananda Sastri, sponsored by the Youth Writers and Artists Guild. It consisted of the exponent giving satisfactory answers to problems on eight different subjects posed consecutively by different specialists in those fields. (Nishedakshari - Dattapadi - Samasasya - Asukavite - Varnane - Puranapatana - Aprasthuta Prasanga - Ganta ganana). It

gave a thrilling experience to the audience through the ambidexterity of the scholar. The Guild had also arranged a 6-day Festival of performing arts entitled 'JAITRA YATRA' and consisted of Dance, Drama and Music Programmes. The Karnataka Nritya Kala Parishat has also been active in presenting various dance programmes and academic sessions. Keshava Nritya Shala, one of the pioneer institutions in this State for affording training in Bharathanatyam has launched a scheme of presenting lectures and demonstrations on the various Indian Dance forms on the morning of the last Sunday of every month, to benefit both students of dance and the lay public.

Speech of Mr. T. T. Vasu, President of the Madras Music Academy, inaugurating Tyagaraja Aradhana Celebrations of the Tyagaraja Sangeetha Vidwath Samajam, Mylapore, on 19th January '87

Sangita Kalanidhi Dr. Semmangudi Srinivasa Iyer, Sangita Kalanidhi M. S. Subbulakshmi, office bearers of the Tyagaraja Sangeetha Vidwath Samajam, Vidwans and Vidushis, Ladies and Gentlemen.

It is really an honour and a privilege for me to be asked to inaugurate this 140th Aradhana festival of Sadguru Tyaga Brahmam to be conducted by this Samajam for ten days from this evening. Tomorrow morning the whole of South India and even cities in the North will be reverberating with the singing of the Pancharatna Kritis of Tyagaraja by his devotees and this Samajam will also be celebrating the *aradhana* in a fitting manner.

Unique body

The Vidwath Samajam is a unique institution in many ways and a by-word for music in Mylapore. It was established fifty years ago by musical giants like Tiger Varadachariar, Muthayya Bhagavathar, T.L. Venkatarama Iyer and Parur Sundaram Iyer with a view to enabling Vidwans to have their own organisation for the propagation of music. It was therefore named as the 'Vidwath Samajam'. Starting with a bamboo shed, the Samajam soon grew to its present structure with financial help from Sri. T. Sadasivam, Sangita Kalanidhi M. S. Subbulakshmi and the Travancore Royal family whose generosity is always available to all deserving causes.

The Samajam has been functioning smoothly ever since and it is the only place in Madras where a panchaloha idol of

Sri. Tyagaraja (gifted by Maharajapuram Viswanatha Iyer) has been installed to inspire the musicians performing in this hall. The serene atmosphere here, far away from the madding crowd, is yet another factor that contributes to the sanctity of this place. Samajam has an impressive record of performance which is perhaps due to the fact that all its programmes are open to the public without any fees. Vidwans also come forward voluntarily to sing here as their homage to Sri Tyagaraja who may be called the Patron Saint of Carnatic music.

Tyagaraja was the greatest among the music composers of this age. He exerted the greatest influence upon musical art in South India during the 18th and 19th centuries and revolutionized the very nature of Karnataka music. His works are of delicate spirituality, full of melodic beauty and in the highest sense, artistic. His songs are accepted today as the only adequate interpretation of classical Karnataka music from both the music and the sahitya points of view.

A Great Initiator

Tyagaraja was as much a product of the golden age of music as he was one of its makers. Virabhadrayya of an earlier generation had already set up conventions and standards for the systematic presentation of Karnataka music. Tyagaraja's formidable contemporaries included Adippiah, Pallavi Gopala Iyer and his own gurus not to speak of Muthuswami Dikshitar and

Syama Sastri who stood in a class of their own. It was in the midst of these giants that young Tyagaraja was called upon to prove his mettle as a composer. In his formative years he had excellent opportunities of listening to a remarkably rich variety of musical fare and imbibing its best elements. He must have not only drunk deep at the fountain of Karnataka music but must have also heard Hindustani music from the Bavas from Maharashtra who visited Thanjavur, and even the English band. We can discern their influence on him in his Nalinakanti (which resembles Gauda Sarang) and Suposhini, which sounds like an English Note.

He was thus fully exposed to the heritage of Indian music and its cultural and integrating aspects. His genius lay in organising the rich material before him for his own ends and conjuring up a world of ethereal beauty. The secret of his art lay in producing something utterly new from ragas and talas used over and again in the past. The one test of the supremacy of his music was that it swept the music world like a deluge, throwing into the shade most of the compositions of the earlier composers. From about the middle of the 19th century, Tyagaraja began to dominate the repertoire of our musicians and the preference of listeners as no other single composer of the past had done.

The Kriti - His Forte

He built a unique musical empire with only one type of composition, the kriti, for which he himself spelt out the grammar in his song 'Sogasuga'. In fact, the kriti form seems to have been awaiting his coming, for in his hands it was to grow to grand proportions and to be

filled with an intenser life than before. His musical Instinct was unerring and it led him to choose the appropriate ragas and talas and the form in which he should cast his compositions. It was a challenge on his part to have attempted no less than 30 kritis in a common raga like Todi in seven different talas. Though primarily based on vocal music, his compositions sound equally communicative on instruments also and have been the mainstay of flute and nagaswaram players ever since his time.

Devotional Aims

He was fully conscious that he was the inheritor of a noble tradition and his mission in life was to project it through his compositions as great singers and saints had done in the past. Saint composers before him were, in the main, either devotees of Rama or Krishna. Ramanand, Kabir, Tulasidas and Bhadrachala Ramadasa had sung the glories of Rama while Jayadeva, Narayana Tirtha, Surdas and Mirabai had poured out their devotion to Krishna. The spiritual initiation Tyagaraja had received early in life made him a confirmed devotee of Rama but, as a cosmopolitan in his religious outlook, he has sung with equal fervour on other deities and has composed an opera based on a Krishna theme. But a mystical rapture appears to have seized him at the very thought of Rama. He, therefore, soaked himself with the inspiration of the story of Rama as depicted by Valmiki and others and composed kritis of everlasting sublimity based on themes connected with his hero.

In the music of Tyagaraja, tradition and invention find a unique balance, He

-studied, with loving reverence, the work of the great master-composers of an earlier period. He mastered the theory of the art not merely from books but from the practice of the virtuosi of his time. He made endless experiments and always struck out along new lines. The precious heritage left behind by him comprises about 700 songs composed in over 200 ragas falling under 45 of the 72 parent scales of Karnataka music and two operas in Telugu.

The Pancharatna kritis

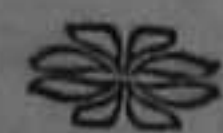
For the past three or four decades, the five kritis of Sri Tyagaraja, called the Pancha Ratna group, in the five ghana ragas viz. Nata, Gaula, Arabhi, Varali and Sri-raga, are being sung regularly in chorus at all celebrations of the Swami's aradhana. Devotees of Tyagaraja might wonder why the pancha ratna kritis, and not any other group kritis, were selected for choral singing during his aradhana and what the special features of these kritis, musical and devotional, are for their being so selected. The question also arises as to how Tyagaraja conceived of these unique musical forms and why no other composer, either before or after him, have attempted these forms.

These five kritis are not straypieces composed by Tyagaraja at random but constitute a deliberate scheme of melody, rhythm and words into which he has pains-

takingly fitted every aspect of the classical form of Karnataka music. They are the most representative of his art as a composer and one may even say that Tyagaraja has, in these pieces, consciously summed up his musical genius in a quintessential form. They are also the only pieces for which full notations are available, there are no *patantaras* and no *sangatis* although, recently, some differences have crept into the Varali piece 'Kanakana ruchira'. The group is therefore ideally suited for being sung in chorus during aradhana celebrations. The kritis fill the air with a moving devotional atmosphere which has to be experienced by the listeners subjectively,

The five kritis are thus an unrivalled group of compositions both from the music and the *sahitya* points of view. Tyagaraja must have composed them when he was at the peak of his career as a composer. The pieces are scholarly without being pedantic. A continuous rendering of them in chorus ushers in an atmosphere of peace, tranquility, devotion. Those who wish to pay their homage to Tyagaraja and all that he stood for, cannot do better than to arrange for these kritis to be sung in all festivals connected with the saint.

I once again thank the Samajam for the honour done to me and I inaugurate this festival with great pleasure.



Book Review

"SATYAMEVA JAYATE" By Violin V. V. Subramanyam, pp. 28 (Price not mentioned)

Music has often to fight a losing battle against unsympathetic surroundings and unintended vilification of past masters. An overdose of the so-called rational attitude can result in a great deal of misunderstanding and confusion even from well-meaning critics. Maharaja Swathi Tirunal's status as a great composer of music has been lately under a cloud, thanks to the pamphlets that have emanated from quarters that otherwise command great respect in the music field. Genuine admirers of Swati Tirunal have felt greatly embarrassed by the harsh criticisms levelled against the vidvans who had sincerely tried to propagate the works of the Maharaja. But cast-iron defences are hard to forge when one is dealing with the work of a prince who ruled in far-away Kerala; and records throwing light on a period 150 years back are only a few and hard to obtain.

It is against this murky background of mixed fact and legend that one welcomes the painstaking research and conclusions embodied in Sri V. V. Subramanian's pamphlet "Satyameva Jayate". Without asperity at those who doubt Swati Tirunal's capacity as a Vaggeyakara and avoiding also a pharisaic zeal in defending the Maharaja, VVS has painstakingly and

scrupulously compiled the case against the "allegations." When one puts down this little book, one is almost fully convinced that Swati Tirunal had all the training and genius to write the music attributed to him and brought to us through the efforts of Muthiah Bhagavathar and Semmangudi Srinivasa Iyer and others; and that the Tanjore quartette's role in the production of that music was at least advisory. A commendable feature of this publication is the scrupulous avoidance of the backlash in which Vadivelu could have been pictured as a merely, servile courtier without any skills as a composer; in other words, that it is not necessary to damn Vadivelu in order to prove Swati Tirunal! VVS has cited chapter and verse to prove his thesis and they are on target. The merit of Mr. R. Krishnaswamy's English translation is that it is natural and does not seem a translation.

The book has a very useful Appendix containing some precise and useful data about the princes of Travancore right up to this generation. VVS, it seems, is not only a brilliant violinist but a serious author. His earlier work on the violin had opened our eyes to that aspect. The work under review does him much credit.

OBITUARY

NARAYANA IYENGAR

Devakottai Narayana Iyengar who died recently was a true representative of the vainika tradition of old. Beginning his apprenticeship with gottuvadyam Sakarama Rao of Thiruvidadamarudur (along with Semmangudi Srinivasa Iyer) he later became the disciple of Karaikudi Subbarama Iyer, the elder of the famous team of "Karaikudi Brothers", who stood for lofty standards in instrumental music (and particularly Pallavi). Unlike his brother Sundararaja Iyengar, a fine mridangam and Kanjira vidvan (who was more brash in every way), Sri Narayana Iyengar was a modest though substantial artist. Among his stints were a teaching assignment at the Central college of music, Madras and at the music school of the Bharatiya Music and Arts Society of Matunga, Bombay. The Music Academy, Madras, recognised his services to music in 1985 by giving a certificate of Merit though many felt that he could have been honoured with the "Sangitha Kalanidhi" title, just like K. S. Narayanaswamy, to whom he was not inferior in any way.

* * *

V. T. RAJAN

Mr. V. T. Rajan's untimely and sudden death has deprived "Shanmukha" of a sincere and ardent well-wishers. From very humble beginnings he, by sheer will power and hard work, rose to the position of a leading paper merchant in Madras and also the owner of one of the best printing establishments in the city. His press was an instrument of great causes, proof of which lies in the fact that the numerous publications of the Kanchi Kamakoti Peeta as well as of other religious bodies were undertaken by Rajan Press without any profit motive. In the musical field, for years the Madras Music Academy's prestigious Journal (Edited by Sri TSP) and other publications have been printed by Sri Rajan. Educational institutions, too, preferred to get their Annuals done by him, irrespective of religious affiliations.

Generous to a fault, Sri Rajan gave of his wealth freely, especially to savants and pundits. The great saint of Kanchi, the Paramacharya, conferred the worthy title of "Guru Sevarathnam" on him, in recognition of his unswerving loyalty to the Mutt Dharma. His loss will be felt not only by the printing industry but by all asthikas and our Santana Dharma.

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ஸங்கீத வித்வத் ஸபை, சென்னை

(Music Academy, Madras),

60-வது மாநாடு - 1986.

மகாநாட்டின் தலைவர் வித்வான் பாலக்காடு

K. V. நாராயணஸ்வாமி அவர்களின் தலைமை உரை

குருவே துணை. மேடையில் வீற்றிருக்கும் அனைவருக்கும், அரங்கில் கூடியிருக்கும் ரசிகப் பெரு மக்கள் அனைவருக்கும், வித்வான்கள் விதுஷிகள் எல்லோருக்கும், இத்த இசை விழாவைத் துவக்கி வைத்துச் சிறப்பிக்க வருகை தந்திருக்கும், மகாவித்வான் ஸங்கீத கலாநிதி செம்மங்குடி ஸ்ரீநிவாஸய்யர் அவர்களுக்கும், மற்றுமுள்ள அனைவருக்கும் என்னுடைய வந்தனங்களை முதலில் தெரிவித்துக் கொள்கிறேன்,

சென்னை சங்கீத வித்வத் சபையின் மணி விழாவாகிய இந்த அறுபதாவது ஆண்டு விழாவிற்கு என்னைத் தேர்ந்தெடுத்துத் தலைமை தாங்க அழைத்திருக்கும் மியூசிக் அகாடமியின் தலைவர், மற்றும் அதைச் சார்ந்த குழுவினர் அனைவருக்கும், எனது நன்றி கலந்த வணக்கங்களைத் தெரிவித்துக் கொள்கிறேன்.

இந்த நேரத்தில், என்னை உருவாக்கிய குருநாதர்களைக் குறிப்பிட்டுச் சொல்ல விரும்புகிறேன். ஐந்து தலைமுறைகளாக சங்கீதத்தையே உபாசனை செய்து வந்தவர்கள் எனது முன்னோர்கள். எனது பாட்டனார் கொல்லங்கோடு நாராயண பாகவதரும், தகப்பனார் வயலின் விச்வநாத பாகவதரும் நான் வாய்பாட்டுத்தான் பாடவேண்டும் என்று தீர்மானித்து, இசையை போதித்துச் சிறு வயதிலேயே ஓரளவு பாடக்கூடிய திறமையை உண்டாக்கினார்கள். அதன் பிறகு இசை சம்பந்தமான பல அம்சங்களைக் கற்க, எனது தந்தையார் மிருதங்க மேதை பாலக்காடு மணி அய்யர் அவர்களிடம் என்னை ஒப்படைத்தார். அரியக்குடி அவர்களிடம் சிஷ்யனாகச் சேர்த்துவிடும் பொறுப்பை மணி அய்யர் அவர்களும், AL. AR. சொக்கையா செட்டியார் அவர்களும் ஏற்றுக் கொண்டார்கள். இந்த சமயத்தில் மணி அய்யர் அவர்கள் பாலக்காட்டில் வசித்து வந்த ஸ்ரீ C. S. கிருஷ்ணையர் அவர்களிடம் நான் மாணவனாக இருந்து கீர்த்தனைகள் கற்றுக்கொள்ளவும் ஏற்பாடு செய்தார். அதன் பிறகு வயலின் மேதை பாப்பா வெட்கடராமய்யா அவர்களிடம் சிஷ்யனாக இருந்து கீர்த்தனைகள் கற்றுக் கொள்ள மணி அய்யரால் சென்னைக்கு அனுப்பி வைக்கப்பட்டேன். பல வருடங்கள் காத்திருந்த பிறகு 1942-ல் சங்கீத ரத்னாகர அரியக்குடி ராமானுஜய்யங்கார் அவர்களிடம் குருகுல வாசத்திற்கு செல்லும் அந்த நல்ல நாளும் வந்தது.

இந்த சந்தர்ப்பத்தில் அக்காலத்து குருகுல வாசம் பற்றிச் சிறிது கூற விரும்புகிறேன். சிஷ்யன் என்பவன், தான் என்ற எண்ணத்தை மறந்து, எல்லாம் குருவே

என்கிற ப்ரக்ஷையுடன் குருகுல வாசம் செய்ய வேண்டும். சாதாரணமாக குருகுல வாசம் கஷ்டம் என்பார்கள். என்னைப் பொறுத்த வரையில் அதை ஒரு கஷ்டமாகவே நான் கருதவில்லை. இசையில் நல்ல முறையில் வளர ஓர் அரிய வாய்ப்பாகவே கருதினேன். ஓரளவு கச்சேரி செய்யக் கூடிய திறமையை எய்திய பிறகுதான் இது போன்ற குருகுல வாசம் செய்யவேண்டும். குருநாதருடன் கூடப்பாடுவதிலும், அவருடன் மேடைக் கச்சேரியிலும், வீட்டிலும், சிநேகிதர்கள் ஜாகையிலும், பிரயாணங்களிலும் எப்போதும் இசை சம்பந்தமான பல விஷயங்களை, நுட்பங்களைத் தெரிந்து கொள்ள சிஷ்யனுக்கு குருகுல வாசத்தில் நிறைய வாய்ப்புகள் கிடைக்கும். குருவினுடைய நுட்பமான இசைத் திறனை அறிந்து கொள்ளும் சக்தியும் சிஷ்யனுக்கு இருக்க வேண்டும். குருகுல வாசம்செய்யாதவர்களுக்கு இந்த அனுபவங்கள் கிடைப்பது அரிது.

எனது குருநாதர் அரியக்குடி அவர்களுடைய சங்கீதத்திலுள்ள விசேஷத்தைப் பற்றிச் சொல்ல ஆசைப்படுகிறேன். அப்படி நான் கூற முற்படுவது, இசையைக் கற்பவர்களுக்கும் பயனுடையதாக இருக்கும். பாடும் சங்கதிகளில் விவரம், பாடுவதில் தெளிவு, அழகு, கச்சேரியை அமைத்துக்கொள்ளும் விதம், இவையெல்லாம் சிறப்பான அம்சங்களாக இருந்தன. ஒரு கட்டத்தில், அவர் வீணை தனம்மாள் அவர்களுடைய சத்தியமான சங்கீதத்தைக்கேட்டு அதில் லயித்திருக்கிறார் என்பது என்னுடைய கணிப்பு. தம்முடைய இசையில் இந்த அம்சத்தை மருந்துபோல் உபயோகித்து, சௌக்கியமான அம்சங்களைப் புகுத்தி ரொம்ப அழகாகப் பாடியிருக்கிறார்கள். கமக சுத்தமான அந்த சாரீரத்தில் அவற்றை சமயமறிந்து, சேர்த்து, அழகு கெடாமல் பாடியதை நான் நிறையக் கேட்டு மனமுருகிப் போயிருக்கிறேன்.

மேடையில் எப்படிக் கச்சேரி செய்ய வேண்டும் என்பதற்கு எங்கள் குருநாதர் ஓர் எடுத்துக்காட்டாக விளங்கினார். வெற்றிகரமாகச் கச்சேரி செய்யும் பாதையை சங்கீத உலகிற்கு வகுத்துக் கொடுத்த மார்க்கதரிசியாவார். கச்சேரி மேடையைக் கோவிலாகவும் ரசிகர்களைத் தெய்வமாகவும் எண்ணினார் என்றால் அது மிகையாகாது. அந்த அளவு ரசிகர்களுக்கு உயர்ந்த ஸ்தானத்தைக் கொடுத்திருந்தார். நமது தென்னிந்திய சாஸ்திரீய சங்கீதத்திற்குக் கூறப்பட்ட வரம்புகளை மீறாமல், சம்பீரதாயம் வழுவாமல், அளவிற்குமேல் இசையை வழங்காமல். இசையுடன் கூடிய வார்த்தைகளின் உச்சரிப்புக்களை அழகு கெடாமல் சொல்லிப் பாடிய பாங்கினை நாம் எவ்வளவோ கேட்டுப் பயன் அடைந்திருக்கிறோம். என் குருநாதருடைய பாட்டு கேட்கப் பரம சுகமாகவும் சுலபமாகவும் இருக்கும். ஆனால் அதைக் கையாள முற்படும் போதுதான் அதனுடைய கஷ்டம் தெரியும். இப்படிப்பட்ட மிகச் சிறந்த இசை மேதையை குருநாதராக அடையும் பாக்கியத்தை எனக்குத் தேடித் தந்த குருவாவார் பாலக்காடு மணி அய்யர் அவர்கள்.

இப்போது பாடிக்கொண்டிருக்கும் இளந்தலைமுறையினருக்குச் சில கருத்துக்களை நான் சொல்ல விரும்புகிறேன். தான் அடைய விரும்பும் இசையின் லட்சியம் இசைக் கலைஞருக்கு எப்போதும் உயர்ந்ததாகவே இருப்பதுபோல், அதை அடையும்

மார்க்கமும் அப்படியே இருக்கவேண்டும். எப்படியோ அடைந்தால் போதும் என்று இருக்கக் கூடாது. இசைக் கலைஞர் எப்போதும் கற்றது கையளவுதான், கல்லாதது உலகளவு என்ற எண்ணத்துடன் செயல்பட வேண்டும். அதுதான் அவர்களுக்கு வளர்ச்சியைக் கொடுக்கும். யாரும் கலையின் பரிபூர்ண லட்சியத்தை அடையவே முடியாது. காரணம். கானல் நீர் கண்ணுக்குத் தெரிவதுபோல் தெரிந்து, நெருங்கும் போது தள்ளிப்போவதைப்போல், லட்சியமும் தள்ளிப்போய். கலைஞருக்கும் லட்சியத்திற்கு முள்ள இடைவெளி அப்படியே இருந்துகொண்டிருக்கும். இதுவே இயற்கை நமக்கு போதிக்கும் வினயமாகும்.

தென்னிந்திய சாஸ்திரீய சங்கீதத்தைப் பாடிப் பயின்று வருபவர்கள் குரலில் சுருதி சுத்தம் ஏற்படுவதற்காக சாதகம் செய்யும்முறை பற்றிச் சிந்திக்க வேண்டும். என் சிந்தனையைச் சொல்கிறேன். முதலில் வாய்விட்டுப்பாடும் பழக்கம் ஏற்படவேண்டும். வாத்தியம் பயிலுபவர்களும் சுருதியைக் கேட்டுக்கொண்டே சாதகம் செய்ய வேண்டும். தம்புராவை முறைப்படி மீட்டவும் சுத்தமாகச் சுருதி சேர்க்கவும் ஒவ்வொருவருக்கும் தெரிந்திருக்க வேண்டும். இதை எழுதும்போது அமெரிக்காவில் வெஸ்லியன் சர்வகலா சாலையில் 1966-ல் நடந்த ஒரு நிகழ்ச்சி நினைவிற்கு வருகிறது. வெஸ்லியனில் அப்போது பேராசிரியராக இருந்த டாக்டர் ராபர்ட் பிரவுன் ஒரு நாள் என்னிடம் எனக்கு விசித்திரமான ஒரு சிஷ்யர் வருகிறார், அனுப்பி வைக்கிறேன் என்றார். வந்தவர் தமக்குப் பாட்டு, வயலின், மிருதங்கம் எதுவும் கற்கவேண்டாம். தம்புரா மீட்ட மட்டும் கற்றுக்கொள்ள வேண்டும் என்றார். எனக்கு ஒரே வியப்பும், மகிழ்ச்சியும். அந்த சிஷ்யர் தம்புரா நாதத்தில் தம் மனத்தைப் பறிகொடுத்து விட்டார். ஒரு மாத அவகாசத்தில் முறைப்படி கற்றுத் தாமே லயித்து, மீட்டவும் பழகி விட்டார். சுருதியை கலைக்காத விரல்கள் அவருடையன.

சுருதிக்காக ஹிந்துஸ்தானி இசைக் கலைஞர்கள் பாடுபடுவதை நாம் பாராட்டாமலிருக்க முடியாது. நம்முடைய இசையில் ஸ்வரங்களில் ஸ்தான சுத்தம், ராக சஞ்சாரங்களில், கமக சஞ்சாரங்களில், ஸ்தான சுத்தம், உச்சரிப்பில் சுருதி சுத்தம் இவையெல்லாவற்றையும் நினைத்துப்பார்த்து மன ஈடுபாடுடன் பாட வேண்டும். இசையிலேயே வாய்ப்பாட்டுத் தான் சிறந்தது என்று சொல்லக்காரணம், வாத்தியங்களுக்கில்லாத சிறப்பு அம்சமான சாகித்திய உச்சரிப்பு இருப்பதினால் தான்.

சாஸ்திரீய சங்கீதத்திற்கு வரவேற்புக் குறைகிறது, கூட்டம் வருவதில்லை என்று பேசப்படுகிறது. என் அபிப்பிராயத்தில் அப்படி அல்ல. நல்லவை கொஞ்சமாகத் தான் இருக்கும், மெதுவாகத்தான் பரவும். சாஸ்திரீய இசையைக் கேட்க விரும்பும் கூட்டம் வரவரப் பெருகிக் தான் வருகிறது. எப்படியாவது கூட்டம் சேர வேண்டும் என்பதற்காக இசைக் கலைஞர், இசையை வழங்கும் முறையை மாற்றி, பழமைக்கு ஒவ்வாத புதுமைகளைப் புகுத்தி, கூட்டத்தை ஈர்க்கக் கூடாது. சாஸ்திரீய முறையில் நாம் பாடி, ரசிகர்களை உருவாக்க வேண்டும். கேட்கும் ரசிகர்களும் இசையை எப்படிக்கேட்கவேண்டும் என்பதை உணர்ந்து, வந்து அமர்ந்து, கச்சேரி பூராவும் கேட்கவேண்டும். நம் இசையில் கேள்வி ஞானம் என்பது மிக முக்கியமானது. இசை நிகழ்ச்சியினுடைய வெற்றியில் ரசிகர்களுக்கும், கலைஞர்களுக்கும் முக்கிய பங்கு உண்டு.

இசை நிகழ்ச்சிகளைக்கேட்டு ரசிக்கும் முறைபற்றிச் சில கட்டுப்பாடுகளைச் சொல்ல விரும்புகிறேன். பாடகர் பாடிக்கொண்டிருக்கும்போது கேட்பவர்கள் கூடக் கூட முன்கூட்டி பழக்கத்தைச் செய்யக்கூடாது. பக்கத்தில் சுகமாகக் கேட்டுக் கொண்டிருப்பவர்களுக்குப் பரம இடைஞ்சல் இது. மௌனமாகக் கேட்கும் பழக்கம் ஏற்பட வேண்டும்.

யிருதங்கம் தனி ஆவர்த்தனம் வாசிக்கும்போது சிலபேர் எழுந்து போகும் பழக்கமும் நல்லதல்ல. அது வாசிப்பவரின் மன மகிழ்ச்சியைக் கெடுத்து விடும். சபையின் நோக்கமறிந்து தனி வாசிக்கும் நேரத்தைக் குறைத்தோ கூட்டியோ அவர்கள் வாசிக்கத் தயாராயிருக்கும் போது, இருந்து ரசிப்பது தான் நமது கடமை. இப்படி வாசிக்கும்போது ரசிகர்களும், இசையைக் கற்பவர்களும் கூடச்சேர்ந்து கொண்டு தாளத்தை அடித்துப் போடக் கூடாது. இப்படிப் போடுவது, சில சமயம், அரங்கினுள்ள ஓலி பெருக்கிகள் மூலம் அதிக சத்தத்துடன் எதிரொலி கேட்டு, காலப்பிரமாண சத்தம் கலைந்து, பரஸ்பர ஈடுபாடு இல்லாமற்போய் விடுகிறது. இதைத் தவிர்க்கத் தாளத்தை அடித்துப்போடாமல் அமைதியாகக் கேட்டு மகிழ வேண்டும்.

பெயர் வாங்கிப் புகழடைந்திருக்கும் இசைக் கலைஞர்களுக்கு ஒரு முக்கியமான பொறுப்பு இருக்கிறது. தன்னைப் பின்பற்ற பலர் ஆவல் கொள்ளக்கூடும். அப்போது தான் இசையை வழங்கும் விதவாளின் பொறுப்பும் அதிகமாகிறது. மனத்தில் பக்தியையும், மனச்சாந்தியையும் தூண்டாத இசையைக் கனவில் கூட நினைத்துப் பார்க்கக் கூடாது. இசையைப் பொறுத்த வரையில் நம் முன்னோர்கள் செய்து வைத்திருக்கும் சாதனைகளை பயபக்தியுடன் அணுகினால் அதுவே நமக்கு நல்ல இசையின் ஒளியைக் காண்பித்துக் கொண்டிருக்கும். இதனால்தான் விஞ்ஞானத்தில், ஆக்க முறையில் முன்னோக்கும் இசைக்களையில் பழமையைப் போற்றும் குணமாகிய பின்னோக்கும் இருக்க வேண்டும் என்று சொல்ல விரும்புகிறேன். நமது முன்னோர்கள் பல நூற்றாண்டுகளாகப் பாடுபட்டுச் செய்து வைத்திருக்கும் இந்த நமது தொல் இசையை நல்ல முறையில் பாடுவதுதான் நமது கடமை. பழமையைப் பழித்துப் புதுமையைப் புகுத்துவது சரியல்ல என்பது எனது அபிப்பிராயம். பழமையைப் பழிக்காமலிருக்க நம் மனத்தைப் பக்குவப்படுத்திக்கொண்டாலே, பழமைக்கு பங்கம் வராத புதுமை தானாகவே உதயமாகும். சம்பிரதாயம் எனப்படுவதை, நம் முன்னோர்கள், இசைக்கு வகுத்திருக்கும் சுருதிலய சாகித்திய சுத்தம், இசையின் உதவியால் சாகித்தியத்தில் ஏற்படும் பாவம். காயக தோஷங்கள் இல்லாமல் பாடுவது, எந்த பாஷையில் பாடினாலும் அந்த பாஷையின் உச்சரிப்புப் பிசகாமல், அதன் பொருளை உணர்ந்து பாடுவது போன்ற வழி முறைகளைத்தான் சொன்னார்கள்.

நம் இசையில், சாதக முறைபற்றி எனக்குத் தெரிந்ததில் சிலவற்றைக் கூறுகிறேன். காலைவேளையில் தாரஸ்தாயியில் பாடாமல் மந்திரஸ்தாயியில் சாதகம் செய்ய வேண்டும். காலைவேளையில் மேல்ஸ்தாயியில் சாதகம் செய்வது குரலிலுள்ள சுலபத்தைக் கடுமையாக்கும். மாலைவேளையில் சுலபமாக்கும். ஆ, ஈ, ஊ, ஓம், என்ற இந்த ஏழு உச்சரிப்புக்களை, ஒவ்வொரு ஸ்வரஸ்தானத்திலும் நீண்ட நேரம் கார்வை கொடுத்துப் பாடிப் பாடி, சுருதியில் சேர்ந்து நிற்கும் நேரத்தைக் கூடுதல் செய்து கொண்டே, பாடிப் பழகவேண்டும். வாய்விட்டுப் பாடப் பழகினால் அதுவே பின்னால் அடக்கிப்

பாடவும் உதவும். முதலிலேயே அடக்கிப் பாடப் பழகி விட்டால், பிறகு வாய்விட்டுப் பாடுவது சிரமமாக இருக்கும். குரலில் சுருதி சுத்தம் ஏற்படுவதற்கு, சுருதி சேர்ந்த தம்புரா, நன்கு டியூன் செய்யப்பட்ட சுருதிப்பெட்டி, அல்லது எலக்டிரானிக் சுருதி பாக்ஸ் இவைகளின் உதவியுடன் சுருதியைக் கேட்டுக் கொண்டே அதில் குரல் சேரும் படி பழகுவது நல்ல பயனைக் கொடுக்கும். மேலே சொன்ன ஏழு உச்சரிப்புக்களை அன்றாடம் அகார சாதகம் செய்தால் சாகித்திய உச்சரிப்பு சுத்தம் கூட ஏற்படும்.

இசைக் கச்சேரியில், தம்புரா சுருதிக்கு அதிக முக்கியத்துவம் கொடுக்க வேண்டும். சுருதி ஒன்று தான் நம்மை இசைக்கச் செய்கிறது. தம்புராவில் சுருதியை நுட்பமாகச் சேர்க்கும் விதத்தைக் கூட ரசிகர்கள் கேட்கச் செய்ய வேண்டும். தம்புரா சுருதி என்றதும் ஒரு சுவையான நிகழ்ச்சி நினைவிற்கு வருகிறது. அக்டோபர் முதல் தேதி அகில உலக இசை தினம் என்று அறிவிக்கப்பட்டதும், சென்னை தமிழ்நாடு இசைக் கல்லூரியின் முதல்வராகப் பணியாற்றிய ஸ்ரீ சந்தியா வந்தனம் ஸ்ரீனிவாச ராவ் அவர்கள் அன்றைய தினத்தைக் கல்லூரியில் கொண்டாட ஓர் அற்புதமான காரியத்தை செய்தார். அன்று கல்லூரியில் இசை நிகழ்ச்சிக்குப் பதிலாக தம்புராவை சுத்தமாகச் சேர்த்து, மீட்டர் செய்து, அதை அனைவரும் 15 நிமிடம் அமர்ந்து கேட்கும்படி செய்து நிகழ்ச்சியை நிறைவு செய்தார். இப்படி நடந்ததை அறிந்து, வயலின் மேதை எஹூதி மெனுஹின் முதல்வரைப் பாராட்டியும் எழுதியிருக்கிறார்.

நம் தென்னிந்திய சாஸ்திரீய சங்கீதத்திற்கு தமிழ், ஸம்ஸ்கிருதம், தெலுங்கு, கன்னடம், மலையாளம் ஆகிய பாஷைகள் எழுதவும் படிக்கவும் தெரிந்திருப்பது நல்லது, ஹிந்துஸ்தானி கூட தெரிந்திருப்பது நல்லது. ஏனெனில் நாம் பஜன்கள் பாடாமலிருப்பதில்லையே! முற் காலத்தில் சிதம்பரம் அண்ணாமலை சர்வக்லாசாலையின் இசைப் பிரிவில் தெலுங்கு கற்றுக்கொள்ள வேண்டும் என்று இருந்தது. ஒவ்வொரு பாஷையிலும் நாம் மேதைகளாக வேண்டாம். ஓரளவு பேச எழுத, படிக்கத் தெரிந்திருந்தாலே அதுவே நம் சங்கீதத்திற்குப் பெரிதும் உதவியாயிருக்கும். ஒரு பாடலை எடுத்துக் கொண்டால் அதை அப்படியே பதம் பிரித்துப்பதம் சேர்த்து வார்த்தைகளாகச் சொல்லத் தெரிந்திருக்க வேண்டும். பாடினால்தான் சாகித்தியம் சொல்ல வரும் என்று இருக்கக் கூடாது. இது போன்ற சிறிய, சிறிய விஷயங்களிலும் கூட நாம் கவனம் செலுத்த வேண்டும்.

இன்னொன்றும் முக்கியமானது. சுருதி சுத்தத்திற்கு எவ்வளவு முக்கியத்துவம் உண்டோ அந்த அளவு லயத்திற்கும் உண்டு. லயம் என்றால் லயிப்பது என்று கூட அர்த்தம். லயம் என்றால் வெறும் தாளம் தான் என்று எண்ண வேண்டாம். லயத்தில் காலப் பிரமாணம் உண்டு. பரலக்காடு மணி அய்யர் அவர்கள் லயத்தைப்பற்றி ஒரு முறை சொன்னது ஞாபகம் வருகிறது. வாழ்க்கையில் எப்படி சுகம், கஷ்டம் என்று மாறி மாறி வருகின்றனவோ, அதே போல் தான் லயத்திலும் கஷ்டம் சுகம் உண்டு என்றார். ஸமம் அரை, சுகம் கால், முக்கால் கஷ்டம் என்றார். கணக்கில் கூடப் பாருங்கள் இதே கஷ்ட சுகம் தான். இரண்டும் கலந்து வருவது தான் லயத்திற்கு அழகு. ஒன்று மட்டும் போதும் என்று திருப்தி அடையக்கூடாது. எதற்குச் சொல்கிறேனென்றால்,

லயத்தை கடைசியில் பார்த்துக் கொள்வோம் சுருதியை முதலில் பார்ப்போம் என்றால் சுருதி வந்து விடும், லயம் தாமதமாகும். இரண்டு கண்களும் எப்படி முக்கியமோ அதேபோல்தான் இதுவும். ஒரே சமயத்தில் சுருதியை லயத்துடன் பாடிப் பழக வேண்டும்.

இந்தக் கட்டத்தில் ஒன்று சொல்ல விரும்புகிறேன். அந்தக் காலத்தில் சலிக் கிழமை தோறும் பஜனை என்று உண்டு. இப்போதும் சில இடங்களில் நடைபெறு கின்றது. வித்வான்களும் நிறைய அதில் பாடியிருக்கிறார்கள். தஞ்சாவூர் மிருதங்கம் நாராயணஸ்வாமி அப்பா என்பவர் பஜனையில் விரும்பி மிருதங்கம் வாசிப்பாராம். இப்போது உலகில் எங்கு போனாலும் வியாழக்கிழமை தோறும் ஸாயிபஜன் மிகுந்த பத்தியுடன் பாடப்பட்டு வருகின்றது. அமெரிக்க நாட்டிலுள்ள ஸாயி பக்தர்களும் நம் மவர்களும் தூய மனத்துடன், சிரத்தையுடன் இசைப்பதைக்கேட்டு நான் வியந்திருக் கிறேன். ஸாயி பஜன் பாடுவதில் ஓர் ஒழுங்கு முறைக் கட்டுப்பாடு இருக்கிறது. குழந் தைகள் முதல் பெரியவர்கள் வரை பங்கு கொள்ள வேண்டிய ஒரு சிறந்த ஏற்பாடு இது. எளிய மெட்டுகளில் சிறிய சிறிய நாமாவளிகளை சுருதியுடனுள், தாளத்துடனும் பாடுவது சிறந்த முறையாகும், இதனால் குழந்தைகளுக்கு சுருதியும் தாளமும் பழக்கப் பட்டு விடும். அவற்றையும் பிராசீன ராகங்களிலுங்கூட எளிமையாக அமைத்துப் பாடவேண்டும்.

இசைக் கலைஞர்களுக்குப் பரந்த தெய்வ சிந்தனையும் கட்டுப்பாடான சாத்வீக ஆகாரப் பழக்க வழக்கங்களும், சங்கீத சித்திரம் எழுதும் சுவராகிய இந்த உடம்பை கட்டுப்பாடான வாழ்க்கை என்ற உயர்ந்த நெறிகளை அமைத்துக்கொண்டு சதா சங்கீத சிந்தனையாகவே வாழ்ந்துவர வேண்டும்.

வாகுதேவாச்சாரியர், பாபநாசம் சிவன் போன்ற வாக்கேயக்காரர்கள் நம் காலத்தில் செய்திருக்கும் இசைத் தொண்டினை என்றும் மறக்க முடியாது.

இந்த உரையை முடிப்பதற்கு முன்னால் நமது இந்திய மாநில சர்க்காருக்குச் சில வேண்டுகோள்களை விடுக்க விரும்புகிறேன்.

தம்புரா, சுருதிப்பெட்டி, வீணை, மிருதங்கம் போன்ற பல இசைக் கருவிகளைச் செய்யும் கைவினைக் கலைஞர்களுக்கு, அவர்கள் கஷ்டப்படாமல் தொழில் செய்ய, குறைந்த வட்டியில் பாங்கு மூலம் கடன் தொகை தாராளமாக வழங்கி, அவர்கள் நல்ல வாத்தியங்களை உருவாக்க உதவவேண்டும்.

மேல் நாட்டில் எல்லாப் பள்ளிக் கூடங்களிலும் இசைபோதனை உண்டு. நம் நாட்டிலும் நம் இசையை போதிக்கத் தக்க ஆசிரியர்களை நியமித்து, எல்லாக் குழந்தை களுக்கும் இசை பயிலும் வாய்ப்பினை அளிக்க வேண்டும்.

சமீபத்தில் இசைக் கலைஞர்கள் ஒன்று கூடி சாஸ்திரீய சங்கீதக் கலைஞர்கள் மன் றம் (CLASSICAL MUSICIAN FORUM-TAMIL NADU) என்ற அமைப்பை ஏற்படுத்தி இசைக் கலைஞர்களுடைய நன்மைகளுக்காகப் பாடுபட உருவாக்கியிருக்கிறது.

இசைக் கலைஞர்களுக்கு ரயிலில் பிரயாணம் செய்ய அரைக்கட்டணச் சலுகை வழங்கு வதில் தனிப்பட்ட இசைக் கலைஞர்களுக்குங் கூட (INDIVIDUAL CONCESSION) எல்லா வகுப்புக்களிலும் அரைக் கட்டணச் சலுகை வழங்க வேண்டும் என்று கேட்டுக் கொள்ளப் பட்டிருக்கிறது. அவர்களுக்கு விமானத்திலுங்கூட கட்டணச் சலுகை வழங்க வேண்டும் என்று கேட்டுக்கொள்கிறோம்.

நல்ல முறையில் அமோகமாக வளர்ந்து வந்திருக்கும் சென்னை மியூசிக் அகாட மிக்குப் பெரிய பொறுப்புக்கள் பல இருக்கின்றன. அதற்குப் பொறுத்தமான தலைவரும் கிடைத்திருக்கிறார். மற்றவர்களின் துணையுடன் எதையும் அவரால் செய்ய முடியும் இசைக் கலைஞர்களாகிய நாங்கள் எங்களுடைய ஒத்துழைப்பை எப்போதும் போல் உங்களுக்குத் தந்து கொண்டிருக்கிறோம். இனியும் தர சித்தமாக இருக்கிறோம். ஒரு வேண்டுகோள். இசைக் கலைஞர்களுள் சச்சேரிகளை டேப் செய்யும்போது அதனுடைய லௌகிக பலன்களை கலைஞர்களும் அடையச் செய்ய வேண்டும். இதற்கு டேப் எடுக்கும் தனி நபர்களும், அகடாமியாரும் வழிகாட்டிகளாக இருந்து உதவு வேண்டும்.

இன்று முதல் 16 தினங்கள் நடக்கவிருக்கும் இந்த இசை விழாவினை நல்ல முறை யில் நடத்த இசைக் கலைஞர்கள், ரசிகப் பெருமக்கள், வித்வத் சபையைச் சேர்ந்தவர் கள் அனைவரும் எனக்குத் துணையாக இருந்து, உதவி புரிய வேண்டும் என்று உங்களை இருகரங்கூப்பிக் கேட்டுக் கொள்கிறேன். நான் நல்லபடியாகப் பாடிக் கொண்டிருக்க வேண்டும் என்ற உங்களுடைய நல்லாசிகளையும் பிரார்த்திக்கிறேன்.

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நன்றி, வணக்கம்

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